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ENFOPOL 316
COTER 136**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 21 October 2015
To: Terrorism Working Party
Subject: Summary of discussions

- 1. Adoption of the agenda**
- 2. Information by the Presidency**

The chair of the TWP gave a summary of the decisions taken at Council meetings since the previous TWP meeting on 9 September 2015:

- the adoption of Council Conclusions on strengthening the use of means of fighting trafficking of firearms;
- the five short-term priority areas identified in the CTC's and the Presidency's papers on the follow-up to the statement of Heads of State and Government of 12 February 2015, requiring immediate action from Member States, as set out in document 12551/15. A report on the state of play would be given at the December JHA Council;
- the adoption on 18 September 2015 of the Decision to sign, on behalf of the EU, the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention of terrorism (CETS No. 196) and the Additional Protocol thereto on the incriminating travel of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (implementing the requirements regarding FTF related offences as laid down in the UN Security Council Resolution 2178(2014));

- on EU-PNR, delegations were informed about the start of the informal trilogues at the end of September and the aim to reach an agreement within the end of the year;
- as a follow-up to the averted attack on the Thalys train on 21 August 2015, the Commission would conduct a study on how to further enhance the operational cooperation in relation to security and transport.

3. Latest incidents of significant interest

- Information from the Member States

Nine delegations took the floor, the majority to give the most recent statistics on foreign terrorist fighters, the trends in travel, and patterns observed.

4. Islamist terrorism and link to crime: Inside and outside Europe (EU CONFIDENTIAL)

- Presentation by INTCEN

Delegations took note of the abovementioned classified presentation given by a representative of IntCen.

5. Threat assessment and counter terrorism strategy

- Presentation by the Montenegrin and Serbian Secret Services

Comprehensive presentations from Montenegro and Serbia on Counter-Terrorism, explaining their legal framework within this area as well as the organisational structure, and including statistical data on foreign terrorist fighters. A number of delegations praised the cooperation with both countries, most recently as partners of the counter-terrorism initiative in the Western Balkans, and their committed work and help and assistance in specific cases as well.

6. Links between terrorism and organised crime in Europe

- Presentation by EUROPOL

The key findings of this presentation were based upon a 25-pages report which could be made available upon request. The report concluded that this was a rare and limited phenomenon. There were no clear evidence that terrorist groups consistently relied on, or cooperated with organised crime groups for their illicit activities, their core motivations being largely different (media attention versus operating under the radar). Europol would continue to cross check information on terrorism and organised crime to monitor the phenomenon.

7. Western Balkans counter-terrorism initiative

- State of play

The Slovenian chair of the Western Balkans Counter Terrorism initiative (WBCTi) gave an overview of activities since the start in November 2014 and of the most recent meeting of 20 October 2015 gathering 17 Member States and representatives from Europol, the EEAS, the Commission and the CTC's office as well as relevant external stakeholders. The Commission and many participants praised the way in which this initiative had been conducted. According to the Commission an efficient donor coordination mechanism would be beneficial and consequently proposed to host a donor coordination conference.

- Discussion of conclusions

11625/1/15 JAI 623 ENFOPOL 228 COTER 118 COWEB 81 (to be issued)

The text of the draft Council Conclusions on the Integrative and Complementary Approach to Counterterrorism and Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans (11625/1/15 JAI 623 ENFOPOL 228 COTER 118 COWEB 81) that had been very well received by the TWP at its previous meeting were acceptable to most delegations; only a couple of minor amendments were suggested. The Presidency intends to have the conclusions adopted at the December JHA-Council, passing through COSI on 24 November 2015. The present text, which consists of the draft conclusions and an Annex, will be split into two and only the conclusions' part (referring to the plan of action). The conclusions were referred to by the Presidency and by the Commission as an example of excellent cooperation between the preparatory bodies of the Council in the counter-terrorism area and beyond.

8. Information on counter terrorism activities

- CTC

(See "Outcome of proceedings" of TWP/COTER: 13506/15)

– Commission

The Commission indicated that the next meeting within the internet platform with industry would take place on 27 November 2015. Apart from all the big internet providers, the platform counted 21 Member States and the CTC among its participants. The meeting would focus on the production of counter-narratives, culminating in the launch of an IT-platform back to back with the December JHA Council. A call for further national experts to the EU Internet Referral Unit (IRU) was made, referring to the desirability of keeping a geographical balance.

9. AOB

Denmark distributed invitations to a seminar on radicalisation - "*Building resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism*" - to take place on 19-20 November 2015, in Aarhus (Denmark), and encouraged delegations to participate.

The Presidency reminded delegations of the deadline of 6 November to reply to the questionnaire on implementation progress of guidelines for the EU strategy for combating radicalization and recruitment to terrorism, issued on 23 October 2015 (CM 4136/15).
