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European Union

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### OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
On: 3 December 2015  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Conclusions of the Council of the EU and of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Integrative and Complementary Approach to Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans (3 December 2015)

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Delegations will find in the annex the Conclusions of the Council of the EU and of the Member States on "*The integrative and complementary approach to counter-terrorism and violent extremism in the Western Balkans*", adopted by the JHA Council at its 3433th meeting held on 3-4 December 2015.

**DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS OF 3 DECEMBER 2015 ON THE INTEGRATIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO COUNTER-TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

**THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,**

RECALLING the Statement of 12 February 2015<sup>1</sup> by the members of the European Council, which underlined their commitment to further reinforce action against terrorist threats, in full compliance with human rights and the rule of law, and provided for a guidance to work towards ensuring the security of citizens, preventing radicalisation and safeguarding values as well as to engage more with third countries<sup>2</sup> on security issues and counter-terrorism, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa and in the Sahel, but also in the Western Balkans, including through new capacitybuilding projects with partners and better targeted EU assistance;

REFERRING TO the Council conclusions on the development of the renewed Internal Security Strategy of 4-5 December 2014<sup>3</sup> and the Council conclusions on the renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy 2015 – 2020<sup>4</sup>, which acknowledged the growing links between the European Union internal and external security and stressed the importance of an integrative and complementary approach aimed at reducing overlapping and avoiding duplication in stepping up cooperation and exchange of best practice with key third countries and partners on security aspects of mutual interest;

NOTING the Conclusions adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 9 February 2015 on counter-terrorism, under the leadership of High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) Mogherini, to strengthen cooperation with the countries in North Africa, the Middle East, the Gulf, Turkey and the Balkans;

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<sup>1</sup> SN 10/15.

<sup>2</sup> The use of the term "countries" in these conclusions does not imply recognition of statehood.

<sup>3</sup> 15670/14.

<sup>4</sup> 9798/15 JAI 442 COSI 67.

BEARING IN MIND the Council guidelines for the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism<sup>5</sup>, inviting to co-ordinate and promote preventive strategies in priority regions and third countries and to continue existing training opportunities and to share existing Member States' experiences and good practices as well as EU initiatives, such as RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network), and on-going EU support in third countries;

NOTING the conclusions of the Brdo Process Ministerial Conference in June 2014, where the Ministers of the Interior of the Western Balkans recognised the value of this initiative and unanimously supported the further development of cooperation by sharing best practices between the EU and the Western Balkan region in the field of counter-terrorism, considering violent extremism, radicalisation and recruitment as priorities;

RECOGNIZING a set of recommendations jointly identified at the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) workshop for government and civil society experts from the Western Balkan region organised in October 2014 in Ljubljana by the EEAS, the Commission, and the US;

NOTING the support expressed in November 2014 by the Salzburg Forum Ministers to the WBCT initiative, their agreement to take an active part in its implementation as well as their invitation to the relevant EU institutions for their involvement in order to contribute to the success of this initiative;

RECOGNIZING the support of the Committee of Ministers of the Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe given to the WBCT Initiative at their meeting in Slovenia in November 2014;

RECALLING the support of the Ministers, the Commission and EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator expressed to the WBCT Initiative at the Ministerial Conference with the WB states: "Tackling Jihadism", held in March 2015 in Vienna, and STRESSING the desirability to develop the initiative further;

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<sup>5</sup> 13469/1/14 REV 1.

RECOGNIZING the support by the Ministers of the Interior and of Justice of the Brdo Process and South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP) expressed to the WBCT Initiative and priorities presented at a joint meeting in April 2015 in Budva, Montenegro;

#### AGREES TO

1. Implement the EU Western Balkan Counter-Terrorism Initiative Integrative Plan of Action (WBCTi iPA) 2015–2017<sup>[6]</sup>.
2. Develop a matrix of planned and on-going activities countering terrorism and violent extremism in the Western Balkans in line with WBCTi iPA 2015–2017, to make it accessible to the Member States, EU institutions and agencies, and to update it regularly, at least twice per year.
3. Review the implementation of the WBCTi iPA 2015–2017 and develop on the basis of the results, gaps and needs a follow-up Integrative Plan of Action 2018-2020.
4. Promote the role of EU agencies and bodies in the Western Balkans.

#### INVITES COSI TO

1. Together with TWP, to monitor the implementation of WBCTi iPA 2015–2017 before the end of 2017, endorse the review thereof and to inform the Council on the implementation results.
2. Submit, on the basis of the draft WBCTi iPA 2018–2020 developed by the Terrorism Working Party, draft conclusions to the Council to define the priorities.
3. Endorse the review of WBCTi iPA 2018–2020 implementation and to inform the Council on WBCTi iPA 2018–2020 implementation results.

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<sup>6</sup> The Integrative Plan of Action, that will be updated, as appropriate, has been split from the conclusions and figures in a separate document, see Annex to 13887/15 (to be issued).

## CALLS UPON THE MEMBER STATES TO

1. Actively support the implementation of the Integrative Plan of Action.
2. Consult the matrix of activities countering terrorism and violent extremism in the Western Balkans to be drawn up as an activity in the WBCTi iPA 2015–2017, before planning any new bilateral or multilateral activity in the Western Balkan region in this field of policy in order to avoid duplication and overlapping.
3. Provide information on relevant bilateral or multilateral planned or on-going activities in the Western Balkan region to update the matrix of activities.

## CALLS UPON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE TO

1. Support the implementation of the Integrative Plan of Action.
2. Participate in the planned evaluation to be carried out at the end of 2017 in order to enable a thoroughly prepared revised iPA for the period 2018–2020.
3. Consult the matrix of activities countering terrorism and violent extremism in the Western Balkans when planning new activity in this field of policy in the Western Balkans in order to avoid duplication and overlapping.
4. Provide relevant information to update the matrix of activities as well as information on funding available for actions foreseen in the Integrative Plan of Action.
5. Inform relevant international partners about the Integrative Plan of Action and its implementation status when appropriate.

## CALLS UPON THE EU AGENCIES AND BODIES TO

1. Support the implementation of the Integrative Plan of Action.
  2. Consult the matrix of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism activities in the Western Balkans when planning new activity in this field of policy in the Western Balkans in order to avoid duplication and overlapping.
  3. Provide relevant information to update the matrix of activities as well as information on funding available for action foreseen with the Integrative Plan of Action.
  4. Inform relevant international partners about the Integrative Plan of Action and its implementation status when appropriate.
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