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## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
On: 24 November 2015  
To: Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security  
Subject: Summary of discussions

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### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The meeting started with a minute of silence in memory of Ms Kristina Bertha, Deputy State Secretary for International Relations of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior and former COSI Chair.

The agenda set out in 14424/15 was subsequently adopted.

### 2. Fight against Terrorism: State of play of the implementation of the five short-term actions:

#### 2.1 Information from the Presidency

The Presidency welcomed the recent adoption of the Council conclusions on counter-terrorism (14406/15 + COR 1) and informed delegations that the topic of counter-terrorism would again be discussed by the Council on 4 December 2015 with a specific focus on the exchange of information. An implementation report on the renewed Internal Security Strategy (2015-2020) would also be presented to the Council.

The Belgian delegation referred to the recent counter-terrorism operations and investigations in Belgium and explained the decision of the Belgian government to raise the alert level for Brussels to level 4, which meant that the threat was very serious and imminent. The Belgian delegation thanked other Member States for the information it had received.

The Commission stated that it would soon submit a proposal for a Directive on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA. The Commission had already adopted an implementing Regulation on common firearms deactivation standards on 18 November 2015 as well as a proposal to revise Directive 91/477, which would be discussed at GENVAL on 26 November and 18 December 2015. The Commission would also present an Action Plan to target the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives in the EU.

The CTC representative presented a report on the state of play regarding the implementation of the Statement of the members of the European Council (14438/15). She listed some positive developments and identified a number of areas where further progress was to be made. Another paper would be prepared for the Council which would also address aviation security, the prevention of radicalisation and cooperation with the MENA region.

## **2.2 Operationalisation of the common risk indicators: information by Frontex and Europol**

The Presidency recalled that the Council had tasked Frontex with supporting the coordinated implementation of the Common Risk Indicators (CRIs) before the end of 2015.

The Frontex representative stated that Frontex was fully committed to supporting Member States in the implementation of the CRIs as set out in 14425/15. He drew delegations' attention to the current narrow scope of those CRIs and suggested widening them further.

The CTC representative stated that the replies to a recent questionnaire (12869/15) showed a mixed picture: even though the CRIs were implemented, systematic checks were not carried out by all Member States.

Several delegations mentioned that the CRIs were to be updated. This could be done by the DUMAS working group, as suggested by Belgium. Some delegations suggested that the CRIs should include foreign fighters from third countries. Europol stated that a questionnaire with regard to developing new (updated) Common Risk Indicators (CRI) had been sent to the Member States on 24 September 2015. Eleven Member States had replied in the meantime, indicating that there were no new CRIs to be reported. The French delegation stressed that systematic controls should be carried out on the basis of the CRIs. However, France considered that more should be done and stressed the need for a revision of the Schengen Borders Code to allow for systematic checks in all circumstances. The Swedish delegation referred to the control of biometric data in passports.

### **2.3 Use of the SIS II for terrorism/foreign terrorist fighters and state of play regarding the electronic connection of Member States' border guards to INTERPOL databases: report by the Commission and the CTC**

The CTC representative informed the meeting on the results of a recently distributed questionnaire on the use of SIS II and INTERPOL databases by EU Member States and Schengen area states to counter terrorism (13059/15), which showed that there had been a significant increase of alerts entered in SIS under Art. 36(2) and (3) in 2015 compared to the previous year. However, the use of the system varied greatly between Member States and the number of alerts entered under Art. 36(3) remained generally very low.

The SIS/SIRENE Working Party would carry out a lessons learnt exercise based on cases in 2015 and define a common approach on the use of SIS II.

The Commission provided some figures on Member States' use of Art. 36(2) and invited Member States to use the new functionality for immediate reporting. The Commission also referred to the results of its questionnaire on Member States' use of the SLTD and stated that the SIS/VIS Committee would meet to draw up an operational roadmap with a view to finding operational results.

The Presidency concluded that there was a strong need to better control and better feed the information systems which would be discussed by the Council on 4 December 2015.

## **2.4 Information exchange, in particular Focal Point Travellers - the establishment of the European Counter-Terrorism Centre (ECTC): report by Europol**

Europol presented a report on the development of the ECTC and on information sharing (14244/15) which was showing some significant shortcomings.

## **2.5 EU IRU and SCAT: information by the Commission**

The Commission referred to the importance of the Internet Referral Unit (IRU) and stated that it would make a proposal to reinforce the IRU. The Commission was working closely with the Presidency in the trilogue on the Europol Regulation in order to provide the IRU with a legal basis. The Commission representative also stated that the Commission was willing to financially support SCAT, which had produced outstanding results.

## **2.6 Use of JHA tools and agencies in the MENA region: paper by the CTC, Commission and EEAS**

The Committee took note of a CTC paper on the use of JHA tools and agencies in the MENA region (14408/15), which was drafted in close consultation with the Commission services, the EEAS, Europol, Eurojust and CEPOL. Various delegations welcomed the paper and its focus on the MENA region but needed more time for scrutiny. Some concerns were voiced regarding the feasibility of some proposals, inter alia regarding the double hatting of Europol liaison officers. Delegations also stated that further coordination was needed with other initiatives to avoid duplication and to make the best possible use of the available resources.

The Presidency stated that this topic would be re-discussed at the forthcoming COSI meeting. It also drew delegations' attention to the Council conclusions of 20 November 2015 on Counter-Terrorism, which tasked COSI with discussing the possibility of developing a methodology for a structured and multilateral approach for operational cooperation on countering terrorist threats. The Presidency would discuss the appropriate follow-up with the incoming Netherlands Presidency.

### **3. Renewed Internal Security Strategy: state of play of the implementation**

The Committee took note of the Presidency implementation report on the renewed ISS as set out in 14079/15. The implementation paper listed the actions which were being/had been implemented and those which were still to be implemented. An executive summary of the report would be drafted for Coreper/the Council.

The Commission reported considerable progress in the implementation of the European Agenda on Security and considered that implementation to be an interinstitutional effort. A brief oral report was given on some concrete actions taken in implementing the European Agenda on Security.

The Presidency thanked the Commission for the great cooperation.

### **4. EU Policy Cycle:**

#### **a) Independent evaluation mechanism: discussion**

The Committee agreed on the principles for the independent evaluation of the Policy Cycle as set out in 13837/15. Some concerns were voiced on the financing of and the work arrangements for the expert group. A number of delegations volunteered to participate in the expert group.

The Presidency concluded by inviting delegations to confirm their participation in the expert group by 27 November 2015. The Presidency noted Member States' concerns regarding financing and stated that some alternative solutions could be found to limit the costs, for example by organising back-to-back meetings with other Council Working Parties. The leading expert would have an important role in organising those meetings. The first meeting of the expert group would be organised in due course which would allow for the exchange of ideas on how it should function.

#### **b) Draft revised SOCTA Methodology**

The Committee validated the revised SOCTA Methodology as set out in 14913/15.

#### **c) Funding**

The Committee decided to wait for more information regarding the Commission's possible decision on a second tranche under the second call of the Delegation Agreement and would re-discuss this topic at a future meeting.

## **5. Council Conclusions on the Integrative and Complementary Approach to Counterterrorism and Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans**

Delegations taking the floor, as well as Europol and the Commission, all praised the initiative and the integrative action plan submitted. The draft conclusions (11625/3/15 REV 3) would be submitted to the Council (JHA) through COREPER for adoption as an 'A' item.

## **6. Future role of COSI: follow-up**

The Committee agreed with the Finnish project proposal which would be carried out by the Finnish Police University College (14119/15). The project would start in the first quarter of 2016. The evaluation report, which would be expected in September 2016, would be submitted to COSI.

The Committee also agreed to end the project group led by Spain on cooperation between Agencies considering that this topic was already discussed in other meetings such as the Heads of JHA Agencies meetings. However, the group could be re-activated in the future if necessary.

The Polish delegation stated that work was still ongoing in the expert group on internal-external security and that a paper would be circulated in the coming weeks.

## **7. Any Other Business**

### **– EU Action Plan Wild life Trafficking: presentation by the Commission**

The Commission informed delegations that it intended to adopt an EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking in March 2016. That Action Plan followed on from a Commission Communication on the EU Approach against Wildlife Trafficking (COM(2014) 347) issued in February 2014. The G7 leaders had also committed in June 2015 to combating wildlife trafficking and had acknowledged the links with organised crime and the financing of insurgencies and terrorism.

### **– JHA Senior Officials meeting EU - OIPC Interpol on 23 September 2015: information by the Presidency**

The Presidency briefly informed delegations about the outcome of the JHA Senior Officials meeting EU-OIPC Interpol, which had been held on 23 November 2015 (15200/15).