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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

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Subject: EU threat assessment in the field of counter-terrorism – the way forward

1. The TWP meetings on 12 September and 5 October 2017 discussed the follow-up to Europol's and EU INTCEN's future-oriented analysis on terrorism. The aim of the Presidency was to invite delegations to elaborate further on how to increase the mutual exchange of views during the drafting phase of these documents in order to come up with specific and targeted recommendations, when appropriate. In addition, the Presidency called on Member States to discuss how to optimise the follow-up to these reports at Council level.¹

¹ According to the procedure laid down in doc. 8409/2/16 REV2, the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) should evaluate the process on "strengthening cooperation on counter-terrorism threat analysis" by the end of 2017.

2. Since the exercise started in 2016, every six months a set of conclusions and policy recommendations have been prepared on the basis of Europol's reports and INTCEN's assessments. The Presidency suggests optimising the process by only drawing up such recommendations in case the threat picture has changed or needs adjustment. Thus, the recommendations would be drawn up as appropriate within the framework of TWP by the Presidency in cooperation with the Member States, the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator (CTC), the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS), and submitted to the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI). While maintaining a clear distinction between the drafting of these reports and the policy follow-up, Europol and INTCEN could be consulted during this process.
3. A change in the threat picture should trigger reflections as to whether the previous recommendations are sufficiently targeted and actionable or would need to be amended. In addition to the possible need for a review of recommendation on the basis of a change in the threat picture and assessments, the Presidency, Member States, the Commission, the CTC, EEAS and other relevant stakeholders may initiate a discussion as to whether the existing recommendations still correspond to the current EU policy. The discussion would be conducted in a TWP meeting. The aim would be to identify any possible gaps in or necessary adjustments to the relevant policies while maintaining flexibility and avoiding extra administrative burden.
4. In case TWP, in cooperation with the CTC, the Commission and EEAS, identifies the need for a change to the recommendations at EU level, TWP should give advice to COSI on the appropriate way forward. The recommendations may, furthermore, feed into a policy discussion at Council level.
5. In conclusion, the Presidency recommends that in case of a change to the threat picture, TWP will elaborate new recommendations or amend the previous ones to be submitted for COSI to endorse and act upon.