



Brussels, 15 June 2020

CM 2621/20

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## COMMUNICATION

### WRITTEN PROCEDURE

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Subject: END OF WRITTEN PROCEDURE

Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering  
Terrorism and Violent Extremism

– Approval

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Delegations are informed that the written procedure, opened by CM 2597/20 of 12 June 2020, was completed on 15 June 2020 at 15h25 and that all delegations agreed to:

- the approval of the **Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism** as set out in document ST 8742/20+COR1.

The statements by Hungary and Italy are reproduced in the Annex to this CM.

The above statements will be included in the summary of acts adopted by the written procedure as statements to be entered in the Council minutes, in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 12(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure.

**Statements to the Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering  
Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

**Statement by Hungary:**

Hungary agrees to the approval of the Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism as set out in document ST 8742/20.

At the same time we would like to inform the Council and the Member States that in our view, the final text on politically motivated extremism is not completely balanced and as concrete examples show, there is a clear link between illegal migration of terrorism. Therefore, the lack of reference to this in the text is not in line with our national position which remains unchanged.

**Statement by Italy:**

On the occasion of the adoption of the Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Italy would like to make the following remarks:

- Italy welcomes the adoption of the Conclusions and greatly appreciates the leadership and efforts shown all along the current semester by the Croatian Presidency on such an important topic, which emphasises the role of EU External Action in preventing and countering terrorism. As a transnational challenge, we recognize the importance to deepen our cooperation and reinforce our security.
- Nonetheless, we would like to draw the attention of the Presidency and MS on a specific issue, which we raised during the negotiating process. We refer to the expression “politically motivated violent extremism and terrorism”, which appears in paragraph 19 of the text, both in the title and within the paragraph (and also in paragraph 7).
- As suggested in our previous interventions, we would have preferred using the expression “ideologically motivated” to describe violent extremism and terrorism stemming from extreme polarization, intolerance, racism and de-humanization of whoever is perceived as an opponent.

- We should avoid referring to “politics” when thoughts and actions turn into violent extremism, when hatred and the intention to hit our States or destroy the foundations of our societies prevail against the democratic and respectful expression of different ideas, which is the core of legitimate political debate.
- In our opinion, in cases of “violent extremism and terrorism”, we are rather in front a of ideological drifts, which may lead at legitimising the use of extreme violence to defend and promote certain ideas at the expenses of pluralism, human rights and fundamental freedoms, posing a challenge to our European values and to our democracies.
- We are convinced that anchoring “violent extremism” to “politics” may lead to manipulations and attempts to undermine freedom of expression. There is the risk that the link “violent extremism – politics” might be extended, improperly, to radical thoughts, which, when not including the acceptance of violence or hatred/violent speech, can be considered legitimate. In our opinion, the expression "politically motivated violent extremism" is ambiguous and risks being exploited. Let’s think about it: when is it correct to define "violent" a political position expressing a legitimate radical message? And again, isn’t there a risk to consider the positions of political opponents, possibly unconventional, impolite or even radical, as expressions of “politically motivated violent extremism”?

These are the considerations that led us to suggest the amendment and we would like that our statement be kept in the records.

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