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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**"I/A" ITEM NOTE**

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From: Presidency in co-operation with the Counter Terrorism Coordinator  
To: COREPER/Council

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No. prev. doc. : doc 9876/04 + COR 1 JAI 170 CATS 25 CRIMORG 45 ENFOPOL 56  
doc 14306/3/04 REV 3 ENFOPOL 155

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Subject : Final report on the Evaluation of National Anti-Terrorist Arrangements:  
Improving national machinery and capability for the fight against terrorism

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1. Delegations will find attached the final report on the Evaluation of National Anti-Terrorist Arrangements.
2. The attached report reflects the text as agreed by the Article 36 Committee at its meeting of 15/16 November 2005.
3. COREPER is requested to invite the Council to approve the attached final report on the Evaluation of National Anti-Terrorist Arrangements.

FINAL REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF  
NATIONAL ANTI-TERRORIST ARRANGEMENTS:  
IMPROVING NATIONAL MACHINERY AND CAPABILITY  
FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

## A Introduction

1. As a consequence of the attacks in the United States of 11 September 2001, the JHA-Council of September 2001 launched an assessment of national anti-terrorist arrangements (peer evaluation) on the basis of considerations of a legislative (...), administrative and technical nature <sup>1</sup>.
2. The interim report <sup>2</sup> released in November 2004 was based on the evaluation of 15 Member States. The final report now includes all 25 Member States <sup>3</sup>.
3. The objectives of the evaluation were
  - to provide an analysis of Member States' structures and capabilities for the fight against terrorism,
  - to highlight good practices and to give recommendations where national structures may be enhanced and
  - to identify practices likely to be possibly applied in other Member States in addition to recommendations at EU level.
4. The evaluation focused on:
  - the national responsibilities at the level of Government Ministries, security and intelligence services and law enforcement agencies, and
  - the level of national and international coordination and cooperation, including exchange of information, in particular that relating to Islamist terrorism.

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1 Doc. 12156/01 JAI 99 of 25 September 2001

2 Doc. 14306/3/04 REV 3 ENFOPOL 155 of 23 November 2004

3 In October 2005, Bulgaria and Rumania have been evaluated on their request.

## **B Summary**

5. Member States are primarily responsible for the fight against terrorism. A wide range of situations exists within the EU and each Member State's counter-terrorism policy/strategy is part of and depends upon its constitutional and legal framework<sup>4</sup>. Other variables are historical background and respective perceptions of the terrorist threat, in particular their own experience of the fight against domestic and international terrorism.
6. Particularly in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, Member States reinforced their counter terrorism machinery, in addition to enhancing international cooperation. They also assessed their counter terrorism capacity, adopting new laws and allocating additional financial or personnel resources to strengthen their counter terrorism machinery, with a special focus on the:
  - exchange of information;
  - coordination and cooperation on both national and international levels;
  - the protection of critical infrastructure, including the identification and protection of vulnerabilities, and
  - crisis and consequence management.
7. In general terms, Member States with longstanding experience in fighting terrorism have developed wide-ranging counter-terrorism strategies involving all relevant Government Ministries and agencies; have developed their capabilities to assess the threat; and have continued to improve their intelligence gathering capabilities.

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<sup>4</sup> cf. doc. 5339/1/03 REV 1 ENFOPOL 2

8. In addition, work at European level has usefully supplemented Member States' domestic efforts. The creation of the Counter-Terrorism Task Force (CTTF) within Europol; that of the CT analytical capability within the EU Situation Centre, and the creation - outside EU structures - of the Counter-Terrorism Group (CTG) are notable examples. Implementation of the Union acquis also helped raise standards in those Member States which joined the Union in 2004.
9. Member States have been evaluated by means of two questionnaires<sup>5</sup> and on-site visits from June 2003 to May 2005 by teams consisting respectively of experts from Member States (2), Commission (1), General Secretariat of the Council (2) and Europol (1).

### **C Recommendations**

10. The individual country evaluations identified good practices in all Member States and identified recommendations for consideration by each Member State
11. Recommendations aim at providing added value or/and new instruments to law enforcement bodies, security services and other Government authorities, in order to develop Member States' capabilities in line with the characteristics and significance of the threat from international terrorism. Legal and structural changes have also been recommended for this purpose.

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<sup>5</sup> Doc. 11722/1/02 REV 1 ENFOPOL 113 CATS 52 COTER 44 and doc. 6337/2/03 REV 2 ENFOPOL 11 RESTREINT UE

12. National good practices with a significance for all or most other Member States were identified as best practices and dealt with as recommendations in the interim report<sup>6</sup> and in this final report. They either reflect already existing situations in one or more Member States or have been developed on the basis of the experiences of the evaluation. This report aims to draw out of those evaluations those elements of good practice which might usefully be applied.
13. In general terms, recommendations have been identified from an operational and practical perspective. It is for each Member State to implement recommendations with regard to its national legal and political framework. Recommendations are to be considered in the national context taking into account political implications. Some recommendations aimed at closing security gaps and enhancing the existing counter terrorism capacity may require constitutional, legal or structural changes to current national arrangements.

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<sup>6</sup> The 2626th Council Meeting Justice and Home Affairs held in Brussels on 2 December 2004 "took note of an Interim Report on the Peer Evaluation of National Anti-Terrorist Arrangements and asked the 15 Member States evaluated to report by June 2005 on the measures taken with regard to the recommendations of the report". The European Council held in Brussels on 16 and 17 December 2004 (doc. 16238/1/04 REV 1 CONCL 4) welcomed " the peer evaluations in 15 Member States of the national structures on combating terrorism to be completed for the 25 by September 2005" and called upon to report on implementation of recommendations aimed at strengthening these structures". With respect to the implementation of recommendations, see also the Luxembourg Presidency and Counter Terrorism Coordinator joint letter of 24 February 2005.

14. In the wake of the evaluation, some Member States have already implemented recommendations as listed in country reports and the interim report or are in the process of implementing them, including new legislation when needed. Without prejudice to the final report on the implementation of recommendations, as required by the Council and previous presidencies as well as the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator, much has already been done from this perspective <sup>7</sup>. An addendum to be attached to this report will list the measures already decided and/or implemented in connection to the peer evaluation in particular.
15. The recommendations are divided into three parts as follows:
- **‘Core’ recommendations at Member States’ level**, which are those linked directly to the field of the evaluation:
    - Coordination (recommendations 1, 2 and 3)
    - Cooperation (recommendation 4)
    - Threat assessment, information collection and access to databases (recommendation 5, 6 and 7)
    - Police training and border control (recommendations 8 and 9)
  - **other significant recommendations at Member States’ level**
    - Use of intelligence as evidence (recommendation 10)
    - Providing the legal base for a range of investigative techniques (recommendation 11)
    - Secure communications systems and security clearances (recommendation 12)
    - Crisis management (recommendation 13)
  - **and recommendations for action at EU level.**  
Working with Europol, Eurojust, the Situation Centre and CEPOL (recommendations 14, 15 and 16).

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<sup>7</sup> "(...) strengthened national antiterrorist arrangement in each Member State directly or indirectly enhance the security of the EU as whole and vice versa" (doc. 14306/3/04 REV 3 ENFOPOL 155)

16. The final report prolongs the interim report and takes into account the evaluation of new Member States. Some recommendations have been redrafted in the light of new Member States' good practices. The final report does not refer in detail to the issues of radicalisation and recruitment, which is the subject of a separate EU Strategy and Action Plan, and that this report focuses on national machinery rather than thematic issues. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that addressing radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism are essential components of an effective counter-terrorism strategy<sup>8</sup>.

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## **Core Recommendations at Member States Level**

### **Coordination**

Experts and relevant agencies in Member States identified coordination and cooperation as issues of crucial importance: Government ministries and a wide range of agencies (law enforcement bodies, security and intelligence agencies, etc) are involved in the fight against terrorism as well as in the area of the fight against the financing of terrorism.

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<sup>8</sup> Given that the EU is producing separately a strategy on radicalization and recruitment, the final report no longer includes recommendations in this area.

**Recommendation 1: Political co-ordination of counter-terrorism efforts**

Member States should consider setting up a high-level national structure or establishing similar relevant mechanisms for drawing up the national counter-terrorism strategy. This structure should be responsible for national strategic policy on: i) the prevention of terrorism; ii) the pursuit and investigation of terrorists by the security and law enforcement authorities; iii) the protection of critical infrastructure; and iv) the development of national crisis and consequence management arrangements.

From this perspective, to ensure coordination/cooperation as well as the coherence of the response to terrorism,

**Recommendation 2: Appointment of a Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator or equivalent Coordination Mechanism**

Member States should consider appointing a high level national authority, such as a national Counter Terrorism Coordinator, or another national coordinating structure, such as a committee consisting of high level governmental officials with the role of coordinating governmental as well as law enforcement and security/intelligence agencies' counter-terrorism activities.

To complement this high level coordination,

**Recommendation 3: Co-ordination of prosecutions**

Member States should consider establishing an authority (e.g. a National Prosecutor) with responsibility for coordination among prosecution services as well as the exchange of information from judicial authorities to law enforcement bodies and security services.

### **Inter-agency co-operation**

Experts also unanimously identified inter-agency cooperation as another essential aspect in fighting terrorism on a day to day basis . From this perspective, a coordinating body/mechanism is a very useful way to promote a joined up approach to terrorism and counter terrorism and an fully coordinated response to terrorism. Coordinating bodies/mechanisms, where set up, are fully part of the national counter terrorism machinery.

#### **Recommendation 4: Inter-agency co-operation**

Member States should consider putting in place national co-ordination arrangements to ensure strong inter-agency co-operation, and to ensure that all competent national authorities have access to the information and intelligence that are needed. One possibility would be for Member States to set up a national coordination arrangement for the day to day exchange of information in the field of prevention, disruption and investigation, involving all security and intelligence services and law enforcement agencies engaged in counter-terrorism.

In addition to this, Member States are recommended to facilitate the exchange of staff with a view to enhancing coordination and cooperation, especially where formal structures are not available.

### **Threat assessment, information collection and access to databases.**

An effective inter-agency cooperation allows for the assessment of the terrorist threat on a multi-agency basis and optimised information exchanges.

**Recommendation 5: All sources threat assessments**

Member States should ensure that national arrangements allow for a coordinated assessment of the terrorist threat drawing on all available sources. Those responsible for producing threat assessments should respond to the requirements of their customers. Assessments should be disseminated in a timely fashion.

In the area of threat assessment, a prerequisite is optimised information collection. Security services also need access to relevant databases.

**Recommendation 6: Information collection and exchange**

It is recommended that Member States' competent authorities optimise the collection and exchange of information, both nationally and internationally, on all aspects of the terrorist threat (including suspect persons and potential perpetrators of terrorist acts) with collection priorities reviewed under a national requirements system.

**Recommendation 7: Access to databases**

In order to detect, identify and profile terrorists at an early stage, as well as terrorist networks and individuals supporting them, Member States should consider putting in place appropriate legislation allowing security services to get access to law enforcement and other relevant governmental agencies/bodies' databases. This access would be strictly restricted by a 'need to know' and would respect data protection requirements. Where appropriate, Member States should encourage security services to provide law enforcement agencies with information relevant to law enforcement if appropriate, by considering the possibility of legislation.

### **Police training and border control**

Police training and border control are areas of importance and police at local (and community) level, as well as border guards, must be appropriately engaged in counter terrorism efforts in particular in terms of information collection.

#### **Recommendation 8: Police training**

Member States should ensure that their police forces, including at local level, are fully engaged in the fight against terrorism and that they receive appropriate training and briefing on the current threat.

#### **Recommendation 9: Border control**

Counter terrorism aspects of border control should be developed, including systematic information collection and sharing with law enforcement agencies and security services.

### **Other significant recommendations at Member State level.**

#### **Use of intelligence as evidence in Court**

Due to existing legal frameworks, the use of intelligence as evidence in Court is of particular importance in some Member States.

**Recommendation 10: The use of intelligence as evidence**

The use of intelligence as evidence in courts is primarily an issue to be dealt with by national authorities. However, its use could undoubtedly have an impact in reinforcing national capacity to prosecute those accused of terrorist activities. Member States are invited to pay attention to this issue and to take necessary steps where appropriate.

**Providing the legal base for a range of investigative techniques**

The security services' first challenge is to prevent and disrupt terrorist activities. To achieve this objective, information collection must be based on an appropriate legal basis to allow relevant agencies proper intelligence gathering.

**Recommendation 11: Providing the legal base for a range of investigative techniques**

Member States should provide their competent authorities with the legal base necessary for them to take full advantage of the range of investigative techniques, both technical and non technical.

**Secure communications systems and security clearances**

Secure communications systems and security clearances facilitate inter-agency cooperation, information sharing and access to databases.

**Recommendation 12: Secure communications systems and security clearances**

Where these do not already exist, Member States should provide their competent authorities with secure communications systems to communicate nationally and internationally. Member States should also ensure that those who need to read and handle confidential information, including their nationals working in EU institutions, hold an appropriate national security clearance.

**Crisis management****Recommendation 13: Crisis management**

Member States should establish national crisis management arrangements, which would bring together all relevant Government Ministries and agencies, in order to promote a rapid and coordinated response to terrorist attacks. These national centres should develop close co-operation among themselves to prepare for and respond to cross border crises.

Contingency planning for the continuity of Government should be put in place.

The crisis management arrangements and contingency plans should be regularly tested in counter-terrorism exercises, including international exercises.

**Recommendations at EU level**

Working with Europol, Eurojust, the Situation Centre and Cepol complement Member States activities while respecting respective competences.

**Recommendation 14: Working with Europol and Eurojust**

Member States should support and make best use of Europol's existing terrorism analytical work files, optimise bilateral information exchanges, including through their Europol national units and the Counter-Terrorism Task Force. Equally they should make full use of Europol and Eurojust in terrorist cases, ensuring information exchange in full accordance with the Council Decision on the exchange of information and cooperation concerning terrorist offences.

Where obstacles exist, Member States should consider the creation of ad hoc working groups at national level involving representatives of their competent authorities, as well as representatives of Europol and/or Eurojust.

Where appropriate, the creation of joint investigation teams should also be considered with the participation of Europol and Eurojust.

While their focus is to support operational cooperation, Europol's and Eurojust's work should, where relevant, support counter-terrorism policy making at EU-level.

**Recommendation 15: Working with the Situation Centre**

Member States should optimise contributions to the SitCen in order to improve SitCen's strategic analysis. Where obstacles to the provision of information to the SitCen exist, Member States should consider setting up ad hoc working groups at national level, involving representatives of the SitCen. The SitCen's assessments should form an integral part of the counter-terrorism policy making process at EU-level.

**Recommendation 16: Working with the European Police College (CEPOL) and the Police Chiefs Task Force**

CEPOL should ensure that political priorities of the Union are taken into account in its work programme. Together with Europol, and bearing in mind the work being done on the COSPOL and any other operational strategies taken forward by the EU Task Force of Chiefs of Police, it should develop training courses as well as awareness programmes on counter-terrorism for law enforcement officials from around the EU, to supplement Member States own training (as per Recommendation 8). Such programmes should promote mutual trust between law enforcement authorities. CEPOL should consider the possibilities for supporting staff exchanges between the relevant competent authorities of Member States. Member States should also work through the Police Chiefs Task Force on CT issues, as appropriate.

**D Conclusion and next steps**

17. The peer evaluation process has been a very valuable tool in helping Member States assess their national counter-terrorism arrangements. It was also an excellent opportunity for Member States' experts to identify best practices from abroad and to learn from other national counter-terrorism arrangements.
18. Improvement of national arrangements to combat terrorism remains the priority and should take place in light of the recommendations of this final report as well as of the recommendations in the respective country reports. In order to maximise the benefit of the peer evaluation process, each Member State will therefore be asked to report back on the improvements it has made to its national counter-terrorism arrangements, and in particular on how they have responded to the recommendations of the relevant country report and, where appropriate, the recommendations of the final report.

19. This reporting shall be done on a systematic basis to allow the Terrorism Working Group to consider and discuss progress at its meetings over the course of 2006 and early 2007. This will provide an opportunity for Member States to provide a full account of action taken at national level. Once all Member States have reported on their efforts a follow-up evaluation round could be considered if appropriate.

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