



EUROPEAN UNION
Delegation to the Council of Europe

1223rd meeting of the Committee of Ministers
Thematic debate: "Council of Europe action against extremism and radicalisation
leading to terrorism"
Strasbourg, 19 March 2015

EU Statement

In a globalised world, terrorist threats can only be countered through international cooperation and determined national action in full compliance with international law, fundamental values and international human rights standards.

Since the terrorist attacks which took place in Paris on January 7th the international community, including the Council of Europe and the European Union, have stepped up their efforts to counter extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism. These terrorist attacks targeted the fundamental values and human rights that are at the heart of the European Union – namely solidarity, freedom, including freedom of expression, pluralism, democracy, tolerance and human dignity.

The heads of State or Government of the Member States of the European Union discussed the issue in the informal European Council meeting on February 12th. They agreed on the work of the EU in the months to come, to further reinforce action against terrorist threats, in full compliance with human rights and rule of law, which are shared values of both the EU and the CoE. The European Union's external relations will also contribute to countering the terrorist threat, which is escalating in certain parts of the EU's neighbourhood, in particular Syria and Libya, in the immediate European neighbourhood.

Both organisations have their own respective and complimentary roles in the fight against terrorism, but they also have common points where enhanced cooperation between the two organisations can bring added value and better results. The EU is looking forward to discussing these issues further in the upcoming CoE Ministerial Meeting on May 19th.

Allow me to highlight a few issues of the European Council conclusions and topical issues on the EU's agenda: EU legislators are dealing with the adoption of the **European Passenger Name Records directive** with solid data protection safeguards. Member States should also quickly implement the **strengthened rules to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing**, and see that all competent authorities step up action to trace financial flows and to effectively freeze assets used for financing terrorism. The adoption of the **Network and Information Security Directive** should advance rapidly, given the importance of cyber-security.

There is obviously a close connection to various CoE instruments and standards. **Preventing radicalisation** is a key element in the fight against terrorism for both the CoE and the EU. **The Council of Europe Action Plan** dedicates great attention to the roots of radicalization through internet, prisons, education and religious dialogue, thus matching EU efforts.

Sustained and coordinated international engagement with the **UN and Global Counterterrorism Forum** as well as with relevant regional initiatives is another way to counter the terrorist threat. The EU is participating in the work of the Council of Europe on the drafting of the **additional protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism on foreign terrorist fighters** and looks forward to the finalisation of the work by the expected deadline.

In April, the European Commission will present a proposal for a **comprehensive European Agenda on Security**. The European Council will report on the detailed implementation of these orientations by its June session.

While **Member States have the primary responsibility for addressing terrorism**, the EU and the CoE can add value in many ways. **The EU is fully committed to the CoE Action Plan to combat extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism and shares the concerns underlying the concrete actions set up by the CoE**. We are committed to work here, as well in Brussels, to find constructive and pragmatic solutions to answer the need for security in Europe and beyond.