
Chapter 31 Screening

Foreign, Security and Defence Policy,
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Counter terrorism strategy
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I. General framework

- General framework of EU action in the field of counter-terrorism is outlined in the **European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy**, adopted by the European Council in December 2005.

- The strategy covers four strands of work:
 - to **prevent**;
 - to **protect**;
 - to **pursue**;
 - to **respond**.

- The strategy describes the added value of the EU as follows:
 - Strengthening national capabilities
 - Facilitating European cooperation
 - Developing collective capability
 - Promoting international partnership

I. General framework

- The strategy is complemented by a detailed **Action Plan**, listing all measures under the four strands. The Action Plan is reviewed every six months by Coreper.
- External aspects of the fight against terrorism are cross-cutting all the four strands of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as of the Action Plan.
- A useful guidance into external aspects of the fight against terrorism is provided also by the **Declaration on Combating Terrorism** adopted by the European Council on 25 March 2004 (see in particular objectives 1, 6 and 7).

I. General framework

- The cross-pillar angle of counter-terrorism within the EU is increasingly taken into account.
- The "Hague Programme: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union" includes provisions relevant for the external action in the field of counter-terrorism.
- The same is true for the "Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA: Global Freedom, Security and Justice" which was adopted in December 2005 on the basis of the Hague Programme.

II. COTER mandate

- The 2nd pillar **Working Party on Terrorism** (COTER) meets on a regular basis every month. The terms of reference of COTER were first established in 1986 and reviewed by COREPER in October 2002.

- According to this mandate, the activities of COTER should focus on the following four areas:
 - Analysis of terrorist threat
 - Coordination of EU positions on counter-terrorism
 - Political dialogue with third countries
 - Assistance programmes in the fight against terrorism

- COTER is also invited to improve coordination with other CFSP working groups and to set up joint meetings, where relevant.

III. Main COTER dossiers

Priority third countries

- COTER identified a certain number of **priority countries for political dialogue and technical assistance** in the field of counter-terrorism. EU needs assessment missions were carried out to two of them and various fields were identified in which these countries could benefit from technical assistance. COTER now coordinates delivery of technical assistance by EU Member States. Work on other priority countries is expected to start in the near future.
- The EU also supports two regional counter-terrorism centres, the **Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC)**, based in Indonesia, and the **African Union Counter-Terrorism Centre** based in Algiers.

III. Main COTER dossiers

Work with the UN and other international organisations (1)

- The **United Nations** provides the international legal framework for the fight against terrorism and a platform for an international consensus in this field.

- COTER coordinates national efforts to introduce new UN instruments and reinforce existing UN instruments. These now consist of:
 - relevant **UN Security Council Resolutions**;
 - **international counter-terrorism Conventions and Protocols.**

III. Main COTER dossiers

Work with the UN and other international organisations (2)

- In its dialogue with third countries, the EU promotes **universal compliance with UN resolutions**, and **universal ratification and implementation of all Conventions and Protocols**. In addition, the EU works with other countries to achieve the adoption of a **Comprehensive UN Convention against International Terrorism**, containing a clear definition and an unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations;
- A **UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy**, based on the proposals of the UN Secretary General was recently adopted.

III. Main COTER dossiers

Work with the UN and other international organisations (3)

- Another organisation with which COTER cooperates on regular basis through the exchange of views and experiences is the **Council of Europe**.
- Furthermore, the EU promotes **universal compliance with 40 recommendations on money laundering and 9 special recommendations on terrorist financing, drawn up by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, an international inter-governmental body for countering financial crime.

III. Main COTER dossiers

Political dialogue

- Counter-terrorism cooperation is raised in political dialogues with a large number of EU partners.
- COTER troika meetings are organised with the US (twice a year), Russia (twice a year), Canada and India (both once per year). Troikas with Russia, Canada and India are cross-pillar. Regular consultations with the US on terrorist financing also take place twice per year.
- COTER also has a CT dialogue in the Euromed framework and a dialogue on terrorist financing with the GCC (in principle, once per year).

IV. Cross-pillar dossiers

Terrorist financing

- A **strategy on terrorist financing** was adopted by the European Council in December 2004. All three pillars are actively involved in the implementation of the strategy. Reports on progress in implementing the strategy are drawn up by the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and presented to Coreper twice a year.
- **UN Designation of terrorist individuals and entities linked to Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban** pursuant to UNSCR 1267 (1999) is automatically transposed into community legislation with a view to impose the sanctions provided for by the Resolution within the EU. **The EU manages its own asset freezing list of terrorist persons and entities not linked to Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban**, established pursuant to UNSCR 1373 (2001).

IV. Cross-pillar dossiers

Radicalisation and recruitment

- A cross-pillar EU **Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism** was adopted by the European Council in December 2005. The strategy sets out the general framework for action to disrupt the activities of networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism; ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism; and promote yet more vigorously security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all.
- The Strategy is complemented by a classified **Action Plan for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment**. The Action Plan identifies both measures to be taken at the level of Member States and measures to be implemented at EU level. Implementation will be reviewed by the Council on an annual basis.

V. Reference documents

- **EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy** (Council web site – Policies/Fight against terrorism)
- **EU Counter-Terrorism Action Plan** (Council web site – Policies/Fight against terrorism)
- **EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism** (Council web site – Policies/Fight against terrorism)
- **Conceptual Framework on the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism** (Council web site – Policies/Fight against terrorism)
- **Declaration on Combating Terrorism - European Council, 25 March 2004** (Council web site – Policies/Fight against terrorism)
- **The Hague Programme: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union** (Council web site – European Council conclusions/Brussels, 4&5 November 2004)
- **A Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA: Global Freedom, Security and Justice** (Council web site – GAERC 12 December 2005)