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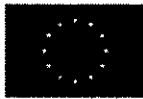
DECLASSIFICATION

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Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.

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NOTE

from : the Presidency
to : COREPER

Subject : Draft EU strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment
- Background paper for Coreper discussion

Following the Special CATS meeting on radicalisation and recruitment held on 18 July, the Presidency has developed the following draft EU Strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment. It aims to build in partners' comments and sets out our common understanding of the challenge; the main threads of our response to it; and the roles of Member State and EU-level action. The paper will form the background to discussion in Coreper on 14 September.

1. Terrorism poses a serious threat to the security of the European Union and the lives of its citizens. The European Union remains determined to tackle this scourge. Doing so requires a comprehensive response. We must reduce our vulnerability to attack by better protecting potential targets and improving our consequence management capabilities. And we must reduce the threat: by disrupting existing terrorist networks and by preventing new recruits to terrorism. At the European Council of 17 December 2004 we agreed to elaborate in 2005 a strategy and action plan to address radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism.

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2. Building on the outline developed under the Luxembourg Presidency and the considerable work since the 25 March 2004 European Council Declaration on Combating Terrorism, this strategy outlines how the EU and Member States will combat radicalisation and recruitment into terrorism.

The Challenge

3. Radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism are not confined to one belief system or political persuasion. But the terrorism perpetrated by Al-Qa'ida and extremists inspired by Al-Qa'ida has become the main terrorist threat to the EU. The Union's response to radicalisation and recruitment therefore focuses on this type of terrorism.
4. The vast majority of EU citizens, including Muslims, do not accept radical ideology. Even amongst the small number that do, only a few turn to terrorism. The reasons why any individual becomes involved in terrorism are unique to that individual. There is no simple profile of a terrorist or cause of terrorism. But it is our responsibility to identify and counter the ways, propaganda and conditions which draw people into terrorism.
5. Addressing this challenge is beyond the power of governments alone. Al-Qa'ida and their ilk will only be defeated with the engagement of the people, and especially the Muslim populations, of Europe and beyond. The overwhelming majority of all peoples espouse the values of peace and tolerance. The European Union rejects any justification for terrorism, including in the context of Islam. The Union welcomes the strong stance that the people of Europe and beyond, including Muslims, have taken to reject terrorism.

Our Response

6. To counter radicalisation and terrorist recruitment, we resolve to:

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- Disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism;
 - Ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of unrepresentative extremism;
 - Promote yet more vigorously justice, democracy and opportunity for all.
7. We will continuously develop our collective understanding of the problem, including by consulting with and listening to Muslims, and others, to ensure our responses remain effective and appropriate.

Disrupting the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism

8. There are practical steps an individual must take to become involved in terrorism. The ability to put ideas into action has been greatly enhanced by globalisation: ease of travel and communication and easy transfer of money ensure easy access to radical ideas and training. The Internet assists this facilitation and provides a means for post-attack justification.
9. We need to spot such behaviour by community policing and effective monitoring of the internet and travel to conflict zones. We should build our expertise by exchanging national assessments and analyses. We also need to disrupt such behaviour. We will limit the activities of those playing a role in radicalisation including in prisons and by examining the issues around admittance and residence of such individuals. We will develop our work to prevent individuals gaining access to terrorist training, targeting especially travel to conflict zones. And we will examine ways to impede terrorist recruitment using the Internet. We will target technical assistance to help others do the same.

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Ensuring that voices of moderation prevail over those of unrepresentative extremism

10. There is a particular world view which brings individuals to consider and justify violence. The core of the issue is a radical argumentation which explains conflicts around the world as proof of a clash between the West and Islam and which offers individuals both an explanation for their grievances and a means to redress them. This diagnosis shapes perceptions of Western policies and increases suspicions of hidden agendas and double standards, particularly when articulated by eloquent leaders.
11. We need to empower moderate voices by engaging with Muslim organisations and faith groups that reject the version of Islam put forward by Al Qaida and others. We need to support the availability of mainstream literature, seek to encourage the emergence of European Muslim imams and enhance language and other training for foreign imams in Europe. We must limit extremist voices by putting in place the right legal framework to prevent individuals from inciting violence. We need to get our own message across more effectively by developing a co-ordinated media strategy to change the perceptions of European and Western policies particularly among Muslim communities, and to correct unfair or inaccurate perceptions of Muslims. We should also develop a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues. We must ensure that by our own policies we do not exacerbate division.

Promoting yet more vigorously justice, democracy and opportunity for all

12. There is a range of conditions in society which may create an environment in which people can more easily be radicalised. Such factors do not necessarily lead to radicalisation, but may make the radical message more appealing. These may include poor or autocratic governance; states moving from autocratic control via inadequate reform to partial democracy; rapid but unmanaged modernisation; and lack of political and economic prospects, unresolved international and domestic strife; and inadequate and inappropriate education. Within the EU, many of these factors are not present, but within individual segments of the population they may apply.

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13. We must eliminate the structural factors supporting radicalisation both within the EU and outside it. As part of our response, within the EU we must target inequalities and discrimination and promote inter-cultural dialogue. Outside of Europe, we must promote good governance, human rights, democracy, as well as education and economic prosperity, both through our political dialogue and assistance programmes. And we must work to resolve conflict.

Increasing our understanding and developing our response appropriately

14. This is the first time that the EU has developed a strategy for combating radicalisation and terrorist recruitment. Though not new, radicalisation of Muslims in Europe is a relatively recent phenomenon. We will continue to develop our collective understanding of the issues, listening to Muslims, and others, comparing national situations and establishing a European picture. Our response will need to evolve in line with the situation in Europe and beyond. To ensure that our approach remains up to date we will review progress every six months, with a more detailed review annually.

Delivering the Strategy

15. Delivering a European Strategy will need the EU Member States working individually and together, and the support of the European Commission and other EU bodies. Much of the work will be for Member States, at a national, regional and local level. And the key to our success will be the degree to which non-governmental groups – communities, religious authorities and other organisations – across Europe play an active part countering the rhetoric of the extremists and highlighting their criminal acts.

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Work at Member State and local level: the frontline

16. The EU Strategy against radicalisation allows Member States to take forward work at national level on the basis of a common understanding of the factors and some common principles and actions for countering them.
17. Much of the challenge in combating radicalisation and terrorist recruitment lies with the EU Member States themselves. They set the social, education, and economic policies that can foster equality and inclusion within mainstream society for all. It is they who determine their foreign, defence and security policies, and the manner in which these are publicly communicated, which international terrorists will try to exploit (to motivate individuals to turn to radical Islam). It is they who determine the strategic priorities of their law enforcement, security and intelligence authorities who police Europe's communities, assess the threat posed by radical elements, and take action when required. It is their Parliaments and people to whom Governments are accountable for these policies. As a result, the challenge of radicalism and means to counter it vary greatly in each Member State.

Work at the pan-European level: an important framework

18. The development and implementation of an EU Strategy against radicalisation relies heavily on the interaction between Member States, working with the European Commission. Through contacts and discussions with partners, Member States are able to co-ordinate their policies; share information about responses developed at national level; determine good practice; and work together to come up with new ideas.
19. The Commission, through the investment of funds for research networks and activities, the organisation of conferences and seminars, programmes to support education and inter-cultural engagement at all levels of our communities, and monitoring and collection of data at the pan-EU level plays an essential role. Its activities help establish a European picture of the issues, develop an understanding of cultural diversity particularly among young people, and improve our understanding of the causes and possible responses to radicalisation across Europe.