



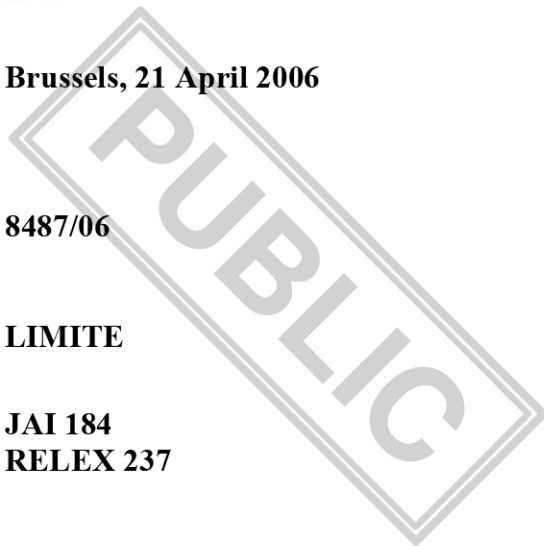
**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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INFORMATION NOTE

from : Presidency
to : Coreper/Council
Subject : State of Play in Implementing the Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA :
 Global Freedom, Security and Justice
 - Work on Action oriented Papers

I. Background

On 1 December 2005 the JHA Council endorsed the Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA and decided to forward it to the General Affairs Council for adoption¹.

This Strategy calls for work on action oriented papers on five specific issues:

- Strengthening counter-terrorism co-operation with North Africa;
- Improving co-operation, on organised crime, corruption, illegal immigration and counter-terrorism, between the EU, Western Balkans and relevant ENP countries;
- Increasing EU support to combating drug production in and trafficking from Afghanistan, including transit routes;

¹ Doc. 15446/05

- increasing and enhancing dialogue and co-operation on migration issues with countries of origin and transit in Africa;
- implementing with Russia the Common Space of freedom, security and justice.

Each of these action oriented papers should include

- i) an analysis of the issue and the EU's objectives, drawing on relevant information from the EU's institutions and from Member States;
- ii) a summary of current action being carried out by both the Commission and by Member States and
- iii) identification of what needs to be done at the political, technical and operational levels in order to meet EU objectives.

These action oriented papers will be produced by the Presidency working with the Council Secretariat and Commission, and supported in particular by groups of interested Member States, with input by the relevant functional and geographical working groups and committees.

II. General remarks on the work/structure of action oriented papers

On the political and strategic expert level the implementation of the JHA-External Strategy has already been discussed.

At the informal JHA Council in Vienna on 12-14 January there was a consensus to start work on three action oriented papers:

- Western Balkans/relevant ENP
- Afghanistan/Drugs
- Africa/Migration

There was a broad consensus, covering different points:

- It was stated that the action oriented papers should draw on existing assessments and build on current action
- and - on this basis - the action oriented papers should define priorities, identify ways to optimise the use of EU instruments (for the respective country, region or topic) and contain concrete incentives to enhance cooperation.

III. Work until now

For the work on the action oriented papers the Presidency therefore decided to establish three “Groups of Friends of the Presidency”, dealing with the three papers on

- Western Balkans and relevant ENP countries,
- Afghanistan/Drugs and
- Africa/Migration.

For the structure of these papers the Presidency will stick to the structure foreseen by the Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA, especially by focusing on the three main issues:

- analysis of the issue and the EU’s objectives,
- summary of current action and
- identification of what needs to be done.

The Group on Western Balkans and relevant ENP countries met on 9 February, 8 and 31 March 2006. It started work on the action oriented paper within the above stated lines. The Group established a draft on the first part of the paper, namely on improving co-operation, on organised crime, corruption, illegal immigration and counter-terrorism, between the EU and Western Balkans. At its next meeting the Group will start the work on the second part – on relevant ENP countries.

The second Group of Friends of the Presidency on Afghanistan/Drugs met on 27 February and 5 April 2005. The work plan of this group is quite similar to the group on Western Balkans/ENP countries. On the basis of the discussions the Presidency currently prepares in cooperation with the Council Secretariat and the Commission a draft of its action oriented paper.

The third Group of Friends of the Presidency on the paper on Africa/Migration was intended to meet for the first time on 28 February 2006. Following the work already done under the UK Presidency on this topic and in light of current projects under way within the Commission, the Presidency decided to postpone this Group.

IV. Timetable ahead

It is intended to give information on the state of play on the ongoing work on the action oriented papers to JHA Council on 27-28 April.

After this Council meeting the draft of the paper on Western Balkans will be finalized by the Group of Friends of the Presidency and be sent via SCIFA, CATS and COREPER to JHA Council for approval at its next meeting on 1-2 June 2006 in Luxemburg.

The draft paper on Afghanistan/Drugs will also be finalized by the Group of Friends of the Presidency and be sent via HDG and COREPER to JHA Council for approval at its next meeting on 1-2 June 2006 in Luxemburg.
