



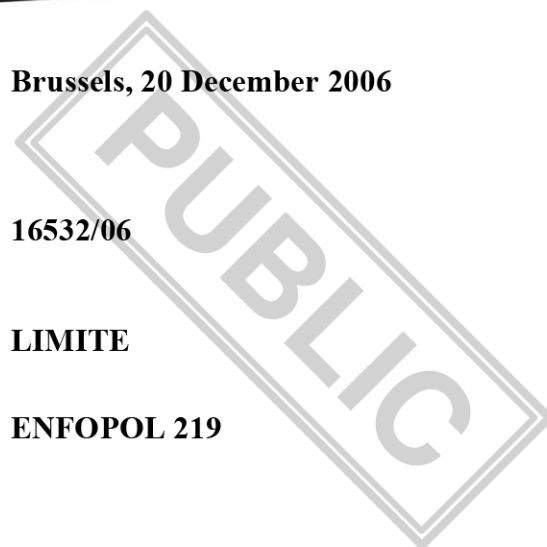
**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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LIMITE

ENFOPOL 219



NOTE

from : German delegation

to : Working Party on Terrorism

No prev. doc. : 9496/06 ENFOPOL 96 JAI 261

Subject : Status report by the German delegation on EU cooperation against the terrorist use of the Internet ("Check the Web")

On 8 June 2006 the Article 36 Committee took note of the German note on the "check the web" project.

The following report outlines the project again for your convenience. It also reports what has been achieved to date and outlines the further work which is foreseen under the German Presidency.

1. The “Check the Web” project

Terrorist structures use the Internet for radicalisation, recruiting and dissemination of specific instructions (e.g. on how to make bombs) for potential terrorists. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of relevant sites by the security authorities is therefore absolutely necessary. But such work also requires many resources and many staff. For this reason monitoring and evaluating the Internet under division-of-labour principles between the Member States of the EU should be stepped up, taking special linguistic competence and other expertise of the security authorities of individual Member States into account.

The aim of the “check the web“ project is to lay the foundation for a coordinated approach between the Member States in monitoring and evaluating **openly accessible Internet sources**. The intention is to create a framework to this effect within which the security authorities can exchange information about evaluated sites and special expert knowledge on a **voluntary basis**.

For this purpose an **information portal** will be set up at **Europol**, where all information provided by the Member States will be entered by Europol and to which all Member States will have access. Europol will not make evaluations on its own, but will only provide the Member States with the **technical platform**. The following information is to be entered into the portal:

1. Contact points of participants;
2. Link lists of websites monitored by participants;
3. Additional helpful information, e.g. member states’ special language competence, technical expertise, legal options in dealing with undesired sites;
4. List of publications by terrorist organisations alongside information about translations and technical analyses;
5. Evaluation results.

The necessary information is transmitted by the Member States on the basis of the Europol Convention.

Mutual knowledge of information is designed to enable the security agencies to reach agreements on monitoring and evaluating the Internet under division-of-labour principles (e.g. with regard to sites from specific countries of origin, specific organisations, in specific languages). At the same time Member States who do not have the necessary capacities to monitor the Internet are given the opportunity to directly access intelligence of other Member States via the information portal or the national contact points.

Participation in the project is voluntary both regarding the question of whether a given Member States wants to make a contribution and which security authorities of individual member states participate. The decision about priorities in monitoring the Internet continues to lie with the Member States. Irrespective of a potential distribution of priorities **Member States will not be obliged to monitor, interrupt or shut down specific websites or to reorganize their monitoring activities.**

Expert meetings for the exchange of experience and best practices will be carried out at regular intervals, where Member States, Europol, SitCen and COM can match their respective expertise and agree, where appropriate, on relevant measures.

2. State of affairs

a. Meeting of experts

On 26/27 September 2006 the kick-off conference on the project took place in Berlin with the majority of Member States, COM, the Council of the Secretariat General, Europol and SitCen participating. At the same time the Conference provided the framework for setting up a network of experts designed to lay the foundation for the intended continuous exchange of information. Representatives from Germany, Austria, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France and the Czech Republic provided insight into their work on monitoring and evaluating the Internet at national level as a basis for discussion.

As part of the conclusions (Doc. 13930/06 RESTREINT UE) all participants endorsed the project as a basis of future cooperation of Member States in monitoring and evaluating open Internet material. It was agreed to continue the initiated exchange of experience at regular intervals.

b. Questionnaire

With the help of a questionnaire sent to all Member States, Germany drew up an overview of national contact points as well as of the intensity and priorities of monitoring activities in the Member States. Twenty-two Member States (including Germany) have answered the questionnaire. It was clear in all of the answers that the fight against terrorist use of the internet is considered to be an important part of the fight against terrorism. The evaluation of the questionnaire was submitted to the Member States in the Council Working Party on Terrorism as a first overview and basis for further work.

c. Information portal

Europol has pledged support for the “Check the Web” project by committing to installing an Information Portal and work on this has already begun. The first version of the Portal should be in operation in May 2007 and should be made accessible to all Member States. Once the Portal is in place the intended exchange of information can begin.

d. As-Sahab sub-project

On 21 November 2006 Germany presented the first sub-project on “As-Sahab“ in the Council Working Party on Terrorism; several Member States as “friends of the presidency“ will share the workload in analysing the media department of Al Qaeda in the framework of this project. On 14 December 2006 this project work began within an expert meeting in Berlin. The first progress report will be presented in March 2007.

e. Contact partners for intelligence services

CTG explained that it would refrain from participating in the “check the web“ project, as it was only an informal group and intelligence services of the Member States would be directly involved in the project via the Member States. By contrast, SitCen said that it would be prepared to act as contact partner for the intelligence services for the “check the web” project.

3. Next Steps

a. Meetings of experts

Under Germany's EU Presidency, additional meetings of experts will be held on 26/27 February 2007 and 21/22 May 2007 in order to consolidate the initiated network, continue the exchange of experience started and deepen mutual trust. Both technical questions as well as substantial aspects will be dealt with.

b. Information portal

Europol is rapidly continuing its work on the information portal. A functional first version of the Portal will be set up by May 2007 and will be accessible to all Member States so that the exchange of information can begin.

c. As-Sahab sub-project

On the basis of data contributed by the Member States, an interim report will be drawn up by 31 March 2007. This initial evaluation is designed to work out the work priorities to be pursued in the course of the project; these priorities will be distributed at an expert meeting between the Member States in April and will be worked on by the Member States in their respective sphere of responsibility. The overall result will be presented in late 2007 and entered into the information portal at Europol in order to ensure that all Member States have full access to these results.

d. Council resolution

On 14/15 June the Council of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers will be informed about the project and the results achieved so far.