



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 16 October 2012

14591/12

ENFOPOL 316

NOTE

from: Presidency

to: COREPER/Council

No. of prev. doc.: 14590/12 ENFOPOL 315

Subject: Draft Council Conclusions on the protection of soft targets from terrorist activities

1. On the basis of the discussions on the protection of soft targets from terrorist activities held at the Terrorism Working Party (TWP) meetings on 6 July and 10 September 2012, the Presidency drafted the above-mentioned draft Council conclusions.
2. The draft Council conclusions, the aim of which is to underline the importance of protection of soft targets and encourage cooperation in the area, have been discussed at the TWP meeting on 4 October 2012, CATS meeting on 9 October and by the JHA Counsellors at their meeting on 15 October 2012. In a silent procedure, an agreement was reached on the text that is in Annex.
3. Coreper is requested to invite the Council to agree on the conclusions as set out in Annex.

Draft Council Conclusions
on the protection of soft targets from terrorist activities

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

NOTING that the threat from terrorists remains significant ;

UNDERLINING that while it is the responsibility of Member States to protect the population against terrorist threats, the EU can contribute to further exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices;

EMPHASIZING the need to maintain an open and accessible society while protecting soft targets;

ACKNOWLEDGING the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy that calls on the Member States to ensure that collective work, and particularly EU research efforts, contributes to developing methodologies for protecting crowded places and other soft targets from attacks;

BEARING IN MIND that the EU Action Plan on Combating Terrorism identified the improvement of protection of soft targets as one of the measures to be undertaken by the competent authorities;

UNDERLINING that defining a programme consisting of protection, detection preparedness elements could be part of the implementation of the EU Internal Security Strategy;

RECALLING the important steps being undertaken by the Member States at national, regional and local level, which were also identified during the second round of peer evaluation focusing on preparedness and consequence management;

NOTING that soft target protection is not based on a "one-size-fits-all" protection policy; there is a need for various approaches to be developed through carrying out effective vulnerability assessments, application of an appropriate combination of security measures, effective communication between relevant authorities and accurate threat monitoring,

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES:

- To establish national capacity in order to be able to carry out terrorist threat assessment for domestic purposes.
- To consider including in the national threat assessments for domestic purposes assessments analysing and determining the threat of a possible terrorist attack, and vulnerabilities also of soft targets. This procedure can be implemented in relation to existing governmental contingency plans.
- To provide protection of soft targets based on, and proportionate to, risk and threat assessments.
- To coordinate and exchange views on best practices with the private sector whenever appropriate and to encourage the private sector to implement all appropriate measures for the protection of soft targets.
- To share best practices on soft target-protection with other Member States whenever appropriate, possibly supported by the EU by organising for example workshops to allow Member States' practitioners designing or implementing protection to share experience with their counterparts in other Member States or within the Member State.
- To carry out training activities in order to be kept up to date and alert and to identify good practices.
- To organise domestic exercises in relation to national contingency plans. Conducting exercises against common scenarios among Member States, whenever appropriate, possibly supported by the EU.
- To consider establishing appropriate public awareness programmes for prevention and resiliency purposes and exchanging best practices in this field between competent national authorities in the Member States.