

Security Union: Commission presents new measures to better protect EU citizens

Brussels, 18 October 2017

As announced by President Juncker in his 2017 State of the Union **Address**, the Commission is today presenting alongside its 11th Security Union Report a set of operational and practical **measures** to better defend EU citizens against terrorist threats and deliver a Europe that protects. The measures aim to address vulnerabilities exposed by recent attacks and will support Member States in **protecting public spaces** and help **deprive** terrorists of the means to act. The Commission is also proposing to further strengthen the **EU's external action on counter-terrorism** — including through **Europol** — and is recommending the EU open negotiations on a **revised Passenger Name Record agreement with Canada**.

First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: "*We will never give in to terrorists who attack our security and our freedoms. Europeans demand that national governments and the EU **tackle** these risks with determination. The new actions announced today will help Member States to deprive terrorists of the means to **carry out** their evil acts and will also better protect our public spaces, and thus our way of life.*"

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: "*Terrorism knows no borders. We will only be able to fight it effectively if we do so jointly – both within the EU and with our partners on a global scale. Effective exchange of information such as Passenger Name Records is critical for the security of our citizens, which is why today we recommend to the Council to authorise negotiations for a revised agreement with Canada and why we will propose to have international agreements between Europol and key countries. We will also continue working with our Member States towards the creation of a future European Intelligence Unit.*"

Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** said: "*Sadly there can never be zero risk of terrorism, but we are continuing to cut the space terrorists have to prepare and carry out their crimes. As terrorist tactics change, we are **stepping up** our support to Member States in **meeting** these **threats**: helping protect the public spaces where people gather, while cutting off terrorists' access to dangerous bomb-making materials, and sources of finance.*"

Protecting public spaces

With terrorists increasingly **targeting** public and crowded spaces, as shown by the recent attacks in Barcelona, London, Manchester and Stockholm, the Commission is today presenting an **Action Plan** to step up the support to Member States efforts to protect and reduce the vulnerability of public spaces. Measures include:

- **Increased financial support:** The Commission is today providing **€18.5 million** from the Internal Security Fund to support transnational projects improving the

protection of public spaces. In 2018, a further **€100 million** from the **Urban Innovative Actions** will support cities **investing in security solutions**.

- **Guidance material:** Over the next year, the Commission will issue new guidance material to help Member States address a wide range of issues related to the protection of public spaces and **raising public awareness**. The guidance will include technical "security by design" solutions to make public spaces more secure while preserving their open and public **nature**.
- **Exchange of best practices:** The Commission will establish a **Practitioners' Forum** and set up a **High Risk Security Network** in November to provide a platform for common training and joint exercises to improve preparedness against attacks.
- **Improving cooperation between local actors and the private sector:** The Commission will set up an **Operators' Forum** to encourage public-private security partnerships and engage with private operators such as shopping malls, concert organisers, sports arenas and car rental companies. The **involvement** of local and regional authorities will be reinforced with a dedicated **high-level meeting** on best practice for the protection of public spaces.

While the likelihood of such attacks is low, the Commission is today also proposing an **Action Plan** to step up EU level preparedness, resilience and coordination against attacks involving **chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) substances**. Measures proposed today include the creation of an EU CBRN **security network** and a CBRN **knowledge hub** to be set up in the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) in Europol.

Depriving terrorists of the means to act

Depriving terrorists of the means to carry out terrorist acts is **crucial** to prevent further attacks from taking place. The Commission is today presenting additional short-term measures to:

- **Restrict access to substances used to make home-made explosives:** The Commission is today presenting a **Recommendation** setting out immediate steps to prevent the misuse of such substances by terrorists. The Commission is also stepping up its **review of the Regulation on explosive precursors** with an evaluation that will be followed by an impact assessment during the first half of 2018.
- **Support law enforcement and judicial authorities when they encounter encryption in criminal investigations**, without weakening encryption at a more general level or affecting a large or **indiscriminate** number of people: The Commission is today proposing technical support measures, a new toolbox of techniques, and training, and proposes setting up a **network of points of expertise**.
- **Tackle terrorist financing:** The Commission will **look into** the obstacles to access financial transaction data in other Member States, and possible EU measures to facilitate and speed up such access.

Reinforcing the EU's external action on counter-terrorism

The Commission is also today proposing to strengthen the EU's external action and cooperation with third countries on counter-terrorism and other serious transnational crime by:

- Recommending to the Council to authorise the opening of negotiations for a **revised Passenger Name Records Agreement with Canada**, in line with all the requirements set out by the European Court of Justice in its **opinion** of 26 July.
- Enhancing Europol's cooperation with third countries by presenting, before the end of the year, recommendations to the Council to authorise the opening of negotiations for agreements between the EU and **Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey** on the **transfer of personal data between Europol** and these countries to prevent and **combat** terrorism and serious crimes.

The 11th Security Union Report is also looking at the next steps on **countering** radicalisation online and offline. Beyond these practical **measures** for the short term, **to be taken** over the next 16 months, the Commission is working towards a **future European Intelligence Unit**, as announced by President Juncker as part of his vision for the European Union by 2025.

Background

Security has been a political priority since the beginning of the Juncker Commission's mandate – from President Juncker's Political Guidelines of July 2014 to the latest State of the Union address on 13 September 2017.

The European Agenda on Security guides the Commission's work in this area, setting out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats, including countering radicalisation, **boosting** cybersecurity, **cutting** terrorist financing as well as improving **information exchange**. Since the adoption of the Agenda, significant progress has been made in its implementation, paving the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union. This progress is reflected in the Commission's reports published **on a regular basis**.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-3947_en.htm