



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

4.3.2015

B8-0223/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on a Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and the League of Arab States to cooperate on counter-terrorism
(2015/2573(RSP))

Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Laura Ferrara, Rolandas Paksas
on behalf of the EFDD Group

B8-0223/2015

European Parliament resolution on a Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and the League of Arab States to cooperate on counter-terrorism (2015/2573(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to Articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
- having regard to Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on counter-terrorism, in particular those of 9 February 2015,
- having regard to the European Union-League of Arab States Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meetings, in particular that of Athens in June 2014,
- having regard to the Memorandum of Understanding between the European External Action Service and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States that was signed on 19 January 2015,
- having regard to the remarks by HR / VP at the press conference after the Foreign Affairs Council of 19 January 2015,
- having regard to UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) of 24 September 2014 on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts,
- having regard to the 2005 EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2011 on EU Counter-Terrorism Policy: main achievements and future challenges¹,
- having regard to the revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism,
- having regard to the EU Internal Security Strategy,
- having regard to the EU Syria and Iraq and Counter-Terrorism/Foreign Fighters Strategy (adopted on 20 October 2014) with a particular focus on foreign terrorist fighters and the EU's Maghreb Communication,
- having regard to the EU Commission communication 'Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response',
- having regard to the informal JHA council in Riga of 29/30 January 2015,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0577

- having regard to its resolution of 10 February 2015 on anti-terrorism measures, whereas terrorism seriously threatens international peace, security and democracy with the aim of undermining pluralistic civil societies,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas terrorism and violent extremism are major threats to security and freedoms at global level and whereas respect for fundamental rights is an essential element of successful counter-terrorism policies;
- B. whereas there has been a worsening of the terror threat on the global level; whereas both Europe, the Arab world and member states of the Arab League have been targeted by terrorist attacks;
- C. whereas Europe and the Arab world face common challenges, including the current situation in the Arab world, especially regarding Libya, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, the Middle East Peace Process and notably the terrorist threat posed by Da'esh;
- D. whereas the EU is facing the severe and growing threat posed by the so-called 'EU foreign fighters', namely individuals who travel to a state other than their state of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration or planning of terrorist acts, or providing or receiving terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflicts; whereas an estimated 3 500 to 5 000 EU nationals have left their homes to become foreign fighters with the outbreak of the war and violence in Syria, Iraq, and Libya, posing an immense challenge to EU citizens' security; whereas the recent terrorist acts in Paris and Copenhagen were committed by EU nationals;
- E. whereas the EU and the LAS share a common interest in long-lasting solutions to ensure regional peace and stability;
- F. whereas there is the need to ensure closer cooperation and a stronger dialogue on political and security matters, cooperation on counter-terrorism, the fight against organised crime and crisis management as well as a stronger cultural dialogue between the EU and the LAS;
- G. whereas on 19 January 2015 the High Representative and Vice-President of the EU met the Secretary-General of the Arab League (LAS) and signed a Memorandum of Understanding furthering cooperation between the EEAS and the LAS;
- H. whereas not only Europe, but the Arab and Muslim world is suffering from the consequences of terrorism;
- I. whereas the Arab League region continues to be marred by serious and systematic violations of human rights, including heavy restrictions on freedom of expression, mass state surveillance and harassment of human rights defenders and opposition activists, abusive law enforcement practices, the absence of an independent judiciary and due process violations;
- 1. Stresses the need to step up counterterrorism in the wake of the rising threat but

reiterates that effective counter-terrorism measures and respect for human rights are not contradictory, but rather they are complementary and mutually reinforcing aims;

2. Emphasises, in particular, the need for the EU, its Member States and its partner countries to base their strategy for combating international terrorism on the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights; underlines, furthermore, that the Union's external actions to combat international terrorism should in the first place be aimed at prevention, and highlights the need to promote dialogue, tolerance and understanding among different cultures and religions;
3. Highlights the fact that terrorism is a multinational multi-dimensional threat and as such has to be confronted in partnership with key allies and countries; welcomes the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and the LAS of 19 January 2015 and believes that this represents an important step forward on a number of challenges these two actors share;
4. Believes that there is the need for a comprehensive strategy that combines internal and external security in the fight against terrorism; calls for democratic and judicial oversight on counter-terrorism policies and believes that the European Parliament should have a role in exercising it; stresses that repressive actions do not provide a solution and that discrimination may reinforce radicalisation and patterns of violence;
5. Calls for the EU and the LAS to address the root causes of extremism which are often found in the socio-economic, cultural and political situation of countries, to not encourage or support repressive trends but to step up its efforts in supporting inclusive, pluralistic and functioning states which are capable of delivering justice and security to their citizens and addressing religious extremism in a manner that is compatible with human rights law;
6. Believes that the LAS, together with the EU, should have a key role in the process of mediation of conflicts that are happening in the Arab world and should work with its members to diminish the tensions between the Sunnis and the Shiites;
7. Warns against the temptation to revert to the previous, short-sighted and ineffective practices of collusion with authoritarian regimes in the name of security, stability and the fight against extremism; believes that it is important to focus on supporting those countries and actors who are genuinely committed to shared values and to reform, notably Tunisia;
8. Welcomes improved security cooperation with third countries and insists that such cooperation – from intelligence sharing to rule of law, justice reform and criminal justice programmes – should be strictly in line with international law and not trump other external policy objectives, notably the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and democratisation;
9. Emphasises, in particular, the need for the EU, its Member States and its partner countries to base their strategy for combating international terrorism on the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights; underlines, furthermore, that the Union's external actions to combat international terrorism should in the first place be aimed at

preventing, countering and prosecuting terrorism;

10. Calls for increased dialogue between development and security experts of the EU and the LAS; reminds that it is crucial to address underlying factors in violence and instability such as conflict, poverty, proliferation of arms and state fragility that provide opportunities for terrorist groups to flourish; stresses the need to focus on preventing and countering radicalisation in the action plans and political dialogues between the EU and Arab League states and to put in place policies to avoid social exclusion and facilitate integration in order to prevent radicalisation processes, including by working together with civil society actors on countering terrorist and radical propaganda;
11. Welcomes the Council intention to fully mainstream counter-terrorism (CT) into EU foreign policy; asks to have all related initiatives implemented as soon as possible and always in compliance with human rights and United Nation Security council resolutions;
12. Believes that information exchange is key to the fight against terrorism provided that international law and human rights standards are respected; welcomes the enhanced cooperation between the EU and the LAS and asks the EEAS, the Commission and all EU agencies to develop frameworks for information exchange and ways for the EU agencies to engage more strategically with the countries in the region in line with the Council conclusions on counter-terrorism;
13. Calls on the VP/HR to provide a report on the ex-ante and ex-post assessments carried out by the Commission services on the human rights impact of its counter-terrorism programmes with countries of the Arab League, as well on the safeguards built within these programmes to ensure their compliance with human rights standards;
14. Believes that is essential to counter the financing of terrorism in coordination with relevant actors including the LAS and its members; calls for the EU to impose sanctions on all those (governments and public or private companies) involved in direct or indirect financing of terrorist groups including through the transport, transformation, refinement and commercialisation of oil extracted in Da'esh-controlled areas, together with strict controls on financial flows in order to prevent economic activity and exploitation of tax havens on the part of Da'esh; calls for the LAS to do more to ensure that actors in its member states do not indirectly finance terrorist group and to monitor its member states compliance with UNSC resolutions 2161 (2014) and 2170 (2014) which condemn any trade, direct or indirect, with IS and associated groups;
15. Asks the LAS to engage with its members in order to prevent direct or indirect influences that could make it more difficult for the parties to the conflict in Libya, Syria, Iraq and Yemen to achieve a political solution; stresses that proxy wars should be avoided at all cost;
16. Believes that PNR could be a possible useful additional tool to counter-terrorism as long as it is implemented in a way that does not infringe on fundamental rights, and as long as it fully respects the data protection rules and does not jeopardise the privacy of citizens;

17. Believes that progress in the Middle East peace process would benefit the region as a whole and believes that the EU and the LAS should work together in order to facilitate a two-state solution in line with its resolution of 17 December 2014 on the recognition of Palestine statehood;
18. Asks to the EU and the LAS to work together to counter the notion of a clash of civilisations between the Islamic World and the West, a narrative that has the potential to radicalise and attract young people to terrorist organisations; in this context calls for enhanced cooperation to formulate policies and programs of social integration and inclusion with the aim to facilitate the intercultural dialogue;
19. Believes that the EU should closely cooperate with the Muslim community as a whole and with other important actors such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, the African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation;
20. Welcomes the decision to have security attachés in the European Union Delegations in relevant countries as well as the decision to improve communication with the Arabic speaking population; in this context believes that it is of the greatest importance to cooperate with civil society in order to listen to the messages that are coming from the Arab world;
21. Strongly believes that any cooperation and initiative between the EU and the LAS should put the respect of human rights, the rule of law and the relevant UN resolutions at its core;
22. Instruct its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Arab league.