WRITTEN QUESTION E-1764/07
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to the Commission

Subject: Fingerprint database - Treaty of Prüm

The Council has recently forwarded the Council Decision on the stepping up of cross-border
cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime (2007/0804/CNS) to the
European Parliament for its opinion. Chapter 2, Articles 8 to 11, of this Council Decision is devoted
to the exchange of fingerprints within the European Union. In particular, national contact points are to
be established to undertake the data transfers.

1.   Is it true that the Commission is considering proposing the setting up of a centralised
database, which would amount to the opposite of data exchange, on the basis of specific national
requests for mutual legal assistance under national legal procedures? The one-line announcement of
the plan as a 'key action' for 'security and freedom' appears in the European Commission's annual
policy strategy for 2008.

2.   If so, does the Commission not see any contradiction between the Council's proposal on
fingerprints, which is based on voluntary sharing of fingerprint information, and the planned
Commission proposal on a centralised database?

3.   Is the implementation of parts of the Treaty of Prüm just a first step towards a centralised
database in this regard?

4.   Is it true that the Commission has undertaken detailed assessments to determine the scope and
cost of the centralised EU fingerprint database? If so, what was the outcome?

5.   Are there further plans to use the fingerprint data for purposes other than the fight against
terrorism?

6.   Does the Commission intend to make the fingerprint data available to allies such as the
United States in the fight against terrorism, in the same way as airline passenger information is
shared?