

Warsaw 2007 - Conclusions

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EIN POLICY ROUNDTABLE ON

TERRORISM AND INTERNAL SECURITY

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Conclusions

The Group's Warsaw roundtable met on Friday 21 September 2007 under the chairmanship of Jaime Mayor Oreja MEP, Vice-President EPP-ED Group. The assassination in Beirut of Antoine Ghanem by Islamist terrorists on 19 September prevented his friend Walid Phares, our lead speaker, from attending in person although, in a tragic way, underlined -- once again -- our common purpose in defeating the terrorist menace. His comments were read by Lee Johnson. WG9 held two significant meetings in Berlin thanks to the Adenauer Foundation (in March 2007) and Madrid thanks to FAES (in June 2007) as well as a relevant session with WG4 in Brussels in July.

The Basis of our Work

- In Warsaw, WG9 re-dedicated itself to the shaping of practical counter-terrorism and security policies for the parties of the European Centre Right, taking on board both institutional concerns and issues requiring forward planning discussed in previous meetings.

- The Centre Right must be seen to lead the fight against terrorism and criminality. This stems from our conviction that modern European nations are secular structures but immensely proud of their Judaeo-Christian traditions, their lawfulness, tolerance, equality, individual freedom and social cohesion. As our presence in Poland reminds us, these are values acquired as much through courage and the bitter experiences of the last century as through rational analysis. WG9 rejects any idea that Jihadist or Salafist inspired terror has any 'legitimate' sources in the liberal democracies of the EU.

- It believes that the longed for inclusion of Muslim minorities into our European political and social life can only happen if they accept, fully, the principles of liberal democracy and European law, values which make us what we are.

#### The Context

- Our starting point is our view that Jihadist terrorism must be fought as an organisation and not some hazy social or political phenomenon. Whilst dialogue with moderate Muslims is, of course, vital, it cannot be a substitute for decisive action against extremists. We need to invest in research but also intelligence to combat them. Jihadism and Salafism pervert religion to realist political goals, perpetuate global conflict and make terrorism seem legitimate. Spain, the UK, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Italy are all now in the front line but the new democracies will also become vulnerable. The problem has been made worse by confused, politically-correct interpretations pushed for an elusive short term advantage, but also by faulty scholarship.

#### The Agenda

- The Parties of the Centre-Right are well placed to prove that civil liberties and the respect of human rights are not undermined by sensible security policies but by the Jihadists. Even so, European values rightly prevent an 'anything goes' strategy. At the same time, we face a situation where compromise is not possible. We are in a win or lose struggle and to think that some justification for Islamism in Europe is plausible will only undermine our values. Parliamentary democracy insists that that political change flows from voting and never from violent action. Economic disadvantage and poverty cannot be shown to have caused Jihadism.

- The European Convention on Human Rights, developed more than half century ago for different circumstances must be superseded by a modern European code which provides a better balance between the rights of individuals and the rights of communities to be secure from attack. We should seek to limit immigration by promoting political change in backward and troubled states through a long-term political and economic partnership with them.

- We must do more to transmit our values proactively and revisit the decision to promote faith-based education which may well generate sectarianism and not inclusion.

#### Urgent Action

- At present in this field the EU is only a virtual Europe. Whilst Jihadism must be countered at nation state level, the EU has the important task of coordinating the fight and supporting it, institutionally but also with ideas. Internal EU solidarity in the struggle is the key to good practice.

- Urgent Action is needed first to simplify the EU's delivery of security. There are 60 regulations, directives and other documents, with some 20 currently being prepared. Even security experts do not understand them. There is a terrorism working group, a working party on terrorism, both assisted by SITCEN. There is also Europol, EUROJUST and FRONTEX. It must make sense to examine the suitability of existing bodies (the terrorism unit is only one with the serious crime department) substituting a single institution, headed not by a coordinator (a new one has just been appointed) but by a High Representative.

- There is some evidence that good intelligence and security work has currently got Jihadists on the defensive, not least because of improved cooperation between partner agencies in the EU. At the same time, we must prepare now for future threats. The IT revolution has its 'dark side' -- Chinese cyber-attacks appear to have been launched at government agencies in the US and the UK, cyberspace is used to promote the Jihadist ideology and the recent Russian cyberattack on Estonia was both completely unacceptable whilst showing how much we were at risk.

## Conclusion

We face an enemy who seeks to destroy our political values and our way of life. We cannot compromise with them but must continue to be vigilant and fight both within the EU and beyond to safeguard them. We plan to invite the new Coordinator and the Commissioner Frattini to address WG9.