



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on cooperation to combat terrorist use of the Internet ("Check the Web")

*2807th JUSTICE and HOME AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 12 and 13 June 2007*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Internet use plays a significant role in the logistic, operational and communication network of terrorist organizations. Terrorists use the Internet not only as a means to communicate and spread propaganda, but also to radicalize, recruit and train terrorists, to spread instructions on how to carry out concrete offences and to transfer information, as well as for terrorist financing purposes.
2. The EU has made it one of its primary goals to tackle the Internet as a basis for radicalization and recruitment to terrorism. The prevention of radicalization processes and the recruitment of potential terrorists is one of the main pillars of the fight against terrorism. Accordingly, the strategy and action plan for combating radicalization and recruitment to terrorism (Doc. 14781/1/05 and Doc. 14782/05) contain measures to combat the terrorist use of the Internet in this regard.
3. The Council supports the initiative "Check the Web", which aims at strengthening cooperation and sharing the task of monitoring and evaluating open Internet sources on a voluntary basis.

P R E S S

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4. The Council welcomes the progress that has been made concerning the coordinated monitoring and evaluation of Islamist terrorist websites within the framework of "Check the Web". The information portal at Europol constitutes an essential tool for cooperation among Member States.

- a. Europol is building the information portal as a technical platform for information exchange among Member States. It will contain the following modules, for which the Member States provide their data and to which all Member States have access:
- Contact persons for strengthening the expert network;
 - Lists of links to monitored websites for mutual information;
 - Additional information (special language competence in the individual Member States, technical expertise, possibilities of legal action against terrorist websites) that enables the sharing of resources;
 - List of announcements by terrorist organizations, to aid in combining resources;
 - Evaluation results to avoid duplication of work.

The first functionalities of the information portal (contact persons, link lists and lists of statements by terrorist organizations) were launched at the conference of the Europol Management Board on 8/9 May 2007 and are accessible to all Member States. Europol will expeditiously extend the information portal.

The establishment of this information portal will facilitate a significantly increased quality of cooperation between the Member States in monitoring and evaluating Islamist terrorist websites. It provides a platform where Member States can make their information accessible to each other, thus compiling the knowledge available within the EU. Member States will have direct and fast access to information on the work performed by other Member States and their results. In urgent cases direct contact can be established and cooperation can be coordinated through the list of national contact persons. In addition, initial steps were taken to strengthen cooperation, on a voluntary basis, under the principle of the division of labour amongst interested Member States.

- b. Cooperation through the information portal is complemented by regular expert meetings. The first of these meetings already took place under the German Presidency. They serve as a forum for the targeted exchange of information and experience including the national approaches in the Member States to monitoring and evaluating of terrorist websites, the analysis of jihadist activities on the Internet and the technical aspects of Internet monitoring. The German Presidency is summarizing the results of these meetings in a handbook. After the German Presidency, Europol will take over the organization of these regular expert meetings.
- c. The Member States have started to work on joint projects. At present some Member States under German lead responsibility are sharing the task of analysing Al Qaida's media department "As-Sahab". If possible, the results of the project will be made available in the information portal.

5. The Council calls upon all the Member States, the Commission, Europol and SitCen to support the “Check the Web” project. The Council confirms it will consider whether the systematic cooperation in sharing the task of monitoring and evaluating the Internet needs to be further strengthened on the basis of the evaluation of “Check the Web”.
 6. The Council requests that future Presidencies report annually on the progress made concerning this cooperation."
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