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SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST AND
CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE PEACEBUILDING PROCESS IN THE WESTERN
BALKANS

LAW ENFORCEMENT - SETTING UP THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO COMBAT TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISTS AND CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

**How can EU tackle Challenges and problems of LE in WBs?
Experiences of the Slovenian Presidency**

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WHAT IS THE AIM OF MY PRESENTATION?

- To give you a brief overview on challenges and problems of Law Enforcement in Western Balkans

AND

- To present you the approach of Slovenian Presidency in tackling challenges and problems in Western Balkans.

STRUCTURE OF MY PRESENTATION

1. Introduction

- Which are the Threats posed from Transnational Terrorists and Criminal Organizations?
- What are the main characteristics and structure of the OC groups from the SEE region?

2. Experiences of the Slovenian Presidency

- How the WB problems and challenges had been tackled by the EU during the Slovenian Presidency to the Council of EU in the first semester 2008?

3. Conclusions

- What have we learned?

We need to be aware that

- Fight against OC, corruption, illegal immigration and terrorism are priorities in relations with the regions surrounding the EU and that developments in these fields have an immediate and reciprocal impact on the security situation, both within the EU and in the regions surrounding the EU;
- WB Countries are countries with EU perspective.

Security situation in WB – EU Response

- Strategy for the external dimension of Justice and Home Affairs (A Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA: Global Freedom, Security and Justice (doc. 15446/05)

AND

- Action Oriented Paper on Improving Cooperation, on Organised Crime, Corruption, Illegal Immigration and Counter-terrorism, between the EU, Western Balkans and relevant ENP countries was adopted by the Council in June 2006 (doc. 9272/06).

Threats posed from Transnational Terrorists and Criminal Organizations

Organised crime groups from the Western Balkans are involved in a variety of serious crimes such as:

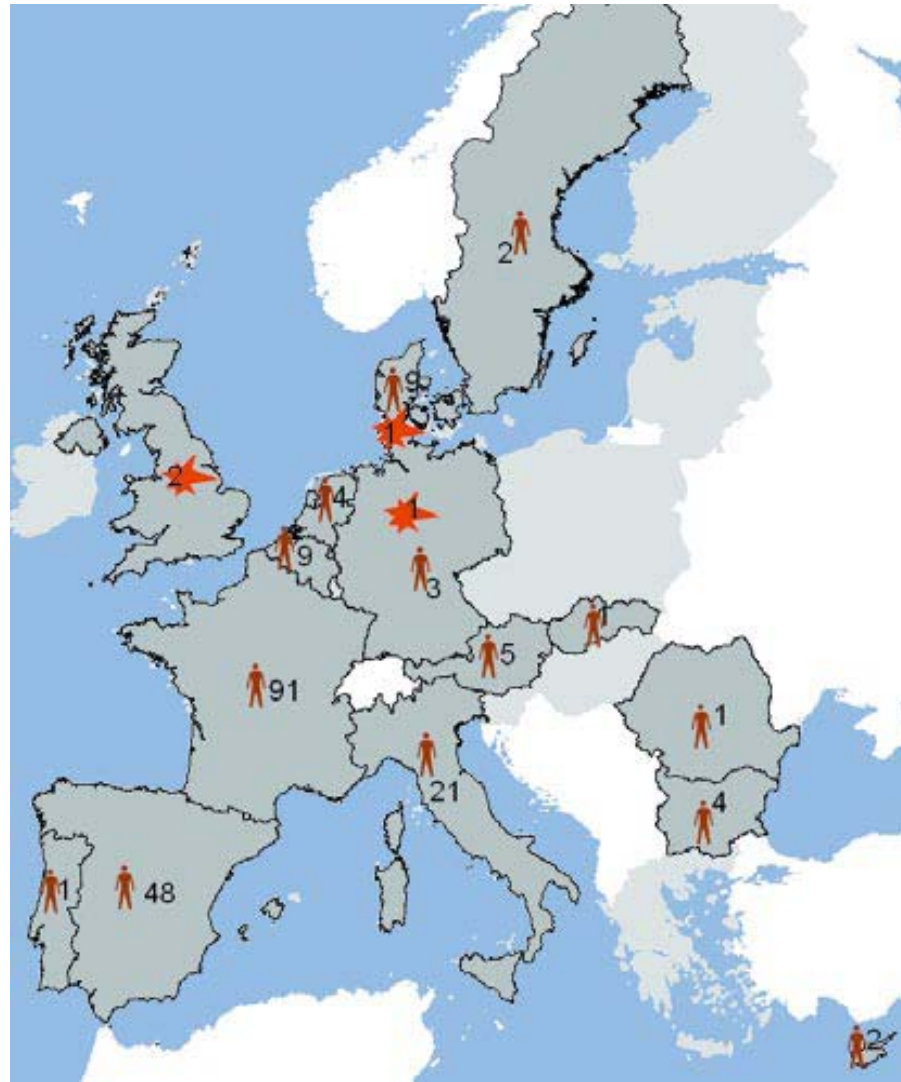
- drug trafficking and diverting precursors;
- facilitation of illegal immigration;
- trafficking in human beings;
- trafficking with weapons and explosives;
- currency counterfeiting and
- credit and debit card fraud.

..., of course in close co-operation with other international OC groups like 'Ndrangheta, Camorra and Cosa Nostra which are also involved in criminal activities in the WB.

Terrorist Attacks and Threats within/to the EU?

As we can see the Western Balkans territory – white island within the South East Europe region - is definitively a convenient territory which may be used as a logistical base for terrorists operating inside of the EU.

01/08/2008



TE-SAT 2008 – The number of failed, foiled and successfully executed attacks and number of arrested suspects for Islamist terrorism in Member States in 2007

How the Westerns Balkan problems and challenges had been tackled by the EU during the Slovenian EU Presidency in the first semester 2008?

- Assistance to produce a common threat assessment for the SEE region;
- Organization of the 6th WB EU Lead Nations Liaison Officers Meeting in Zagreb, 14 - 15 February 2008;
- Strengthening of the EU Lead Nations Liaison Officers network in the WB;
- Draft Council Conclusions on co-operation with WB countries on the fight against OC and terrorism.

- Organization of a two-day meeting of counter-terrorism experts on 26 and 27 March 2008 in Gotenica, Slovenia, in order to find out how to transfer the EU best practices in counter-terrorism to Western Balkans;
- Conclusions from the Expert Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Frontex Europol Report on the High Risk Routes of Illegal Migration in the Western Balkan Countries within the Frontex Risk Analysis Network;
- Draft Council Conclusions on the further development of the SECI Center;
- EU Drugs Troika and interested delegations meeting with Western Balkans.

- EU National Drugs Coordinators Meeting on 15 May 2008 in Brussels;
- Conference on police cooperation with the WB countries in the field of education and training of police officers;
- Second report on the state of implementation by Member States and EU bodies of the Action-Oriented Paper on WB;
- Secondment of Common Immigration Liaison Officers to the Montenegro.

ASSISTANCE TO PRODUCE A COMMON THREAT ASSESSMENT FOR THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN REGION

- AOP for WB requires close police cooperation to address common threats;
- Therefore Slovenia started the process of developing idea of Common threat assessment for the South East European at the 7th Ministerial Conference at Brdo on 4 October 2007 ('Brdo Process');
- Idea of drawing up of a common threat assessment for the SEE region was unanimously supported by all present delegations.

ASSISTANCE TO PRODUCE A COMMON THREAT ASSESSMENT FOR THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN REGION-2

- During the period January-March 2008 Slovenian analytical experts visited analytical units in all WB Countries in order to identify analytical capacities;
- During the Slovenian Presidency Slovenia in cooperation with Austria organised the conference “Strengthening the cooperation in the fight against serious crime - Contribution of regional OCTAs to security in Europe”;
- Seminar for analysts of SECI Center and Western Balkan countries was organized and implemented jointly with Europol during 7 and 11 April 2008 in Slovenia.

Planned future steps

- Europol should provide additional training to the SECI Center's new analytical staff;
- Questionnaire template should be developed by SECI Center with the support of Europol until the end of September 2008;
- Based on the questionnaires the WB States will draw up national reports (foreseen by the end of November 2008);
- The SECI Center should draw up a common threat assessment for the South East Europe region (foreseen by the end of the first quarter of 2009).

Planned future steps-2

- Identification of priorities will be made by the SECI Center with the support of Europol and interested MSs;
- On the basis of common priorities Action Plan will be developed (foreseen to be adopted in the Brdo Process in October 2009);
- Common report on the implementation of priorities will be prepared by the SECI Center, adoption is foreseen at the Brdo Process 2010, where future need will be assessed.

And what is the added value of a Common threat assessment on organised crime for SEE region?

- Addresses a major intelligence gap of EU OCTA;
- Provides deeper insight into the problem and enhances the quality of threat assessments;
- Improves information and intelligence-sharing;
- encourages LE authorities to collate all relevant information on OC in the WB;
- Better identifies priorities in the WB;
- uses common European methodology.

What is the additional benefit?

- Europol and SECI will strengthen its role in the region;
- Interagency cooperation in the region will be enhanced;
- Common security standards in the region will be set-up;
- The ILP model and ECIM will be implemented;
- The results of Common threat assessment on organised crime for SEE region and EU OCTA will be comparable and
- Both, EU and Western Balkan States, will get a deeper insight of the problem allowing to better identify priorities and target assistance in fighting

ORGANIZATION OF THE 6th WESTERN BALKANS EU LEAD NATIONS LIAISON OFFICERS MEETING

- Organized in Zagreb, 14 – 15 February 2008;
- The representatives of all lead nations were present, representatives of WB states, COM, GSC, Europol, Eurojust, Frontex, SECI, EUPM and US;
- The emphasis was placed upon the increase of different organised crime activities (BiH), more efficient cooperation with Europol (HR), new bilateral agreements on police cooperation (AL, fYRoM), suspended police reforms (BiH), and lack of proper coordination (Montenegro and Serbia).

ORGANIZATION OF THE 6th WESTERN BALKANS EU LEAD NATIONS LIAISON OFFICERS MEETING-2

- The representatives of the WB states provided the general overview concerning the activities of LE agencies;
- Europol made a presentation on Asset Seizure, Financial intelligence led policing and Suspicious Transactions;
- Frontex presented a joint Frontex/Europol report on high risk routes of illegal migration in the WB region;
- Presidency pointed out an obvious need for a constant “support team” for coordination, better information exchange and better preparation of LN LO meetings.

Strengthening of the EU Lead Nations Liaison Officers network in the WB

- “Support team” would be composed of the representative of Europol, GSC and the COM;
- The activity of the “support team” would be to contribute in the framework of available resources to the overall coordination of the activities concerning the WB region related to liaison officers.

In practice Support team will:

- Provide information on planned and undertaken activities concerning the region;
- Support the preparation of the local meetings organised by the Lead Nations as well as regional meetings under each Presidency;
- Foster the exchange of information concerning current and envisaged projects;
- Deal with any requests formulated by the

Draft Council Conclusions on co-operation with WB countries on the fight against OC and terrorism

SI Presidency proposed the following action:

- To invite Europol and SitCen to consider the possibility of carrying out regular assessments of the use of explosives originating in WB states and of the extent of radicalisation and recruitment in the region;
- To invite competent authorities of the MS in cooperation with EU institutions to engage in dialogue and in exchanges of best practice with WB states on the security of explosives with a view to raising security standards for the control of explosives.

Draft Council Conclusions on co-operation with WB countries on the fight against OC and terrorism -2

SI Presidency also proposed the following action:

- To invite competent authorities of the MS in cooperation with EU institutions to share with the WB states the general recommendations resulting from the first round of peer evaluation.

Organization of a two-day meeting of counter-terrorism experts on 26 and 27 March 2008 in Gotenica, Slovenia

Meeting was organized in order to find out how to transfer the EU best practices in counter-terrorism to WB.

Reached agreement:

- it is necessary to continue with such activities;
- Slovenia should continue to strive for consensus in the WB after the signing of the Memorandum and after the transfer of good practice in the foreseen form;
- Slovenia should help Europol in the identification of security problems that will be the subject of the next meetings of experts;
- Europol should start visiting individual countries, and if there is interest, Slovenia will take part in preparing and carrying out these visits.

Conclusions from the Expert Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Frontex /Europol Report on the High Risk Routes of Illegal Migration in the WB Countries

The adopted conclusions are following:

- Frontex and Europol would like to continue by delivering smaller intelligence products with an operational focus and involving both EU MSs and WB;
- Frontex aims at establishing a network of cooperation with the WB Countries;
- Frontex and Europol will explore the possibilities of providing training to the WB Countries.

Draft Council Conclusions on the further development of the SECI Center

- Further development of the SECI Center/SELEC;
- More efficient police and customs cooperation in SEE;
- The driving role of Europol, as the EU body for the fight against serious crime, should be reflected in the draft SELEC Convention;
- EU SECI Support Group was invited to immediately carry out an assessment concerning the further improvement of the working mechanism between SELEC and Europol.

EU Drugs Troika and interested delegations meeting with WB Countries

The Troika meeting was organised by the Slovenian Presidency on 2 April 2008 in Brussels (six WB Countries participated);

Following suggestions had been agreed during the meeting:

- Designation of a contact point to be updated on all institutional and legal developments in WB Countries;
- Organization of a forum for the exchange of best practices between the relevant Balkan drug agencies and
- Appointment of a Drug Liaison officer to enhance coordination and cooperation with the EU

EU National Drugs Coordinators Meeting on 15 May 2008 in Brussels

- EU national drugs coordinators' meeting was organized in order to exchange views and experience at EU level;
- The meeting was also attended by delegations of Western Balkan countries and by a representative of Trimbos institute.

Conference on police cooperation with the WB countries in the field of education and training of police officers

- Conference was organized on Slovenia's initiative (17 - 19 March, Bled, Slovenia);
- The conference was devoted to presenting CEPOL and police training institutions in the WB, exchanging experience and searching for cooperation possibilities in the area of police training, especially in combating OC;
- Conference was attended also by representatives of all WB Countries.

Second report on the state of implementation by MSs and EU bodies of the AOP on Improving Cooperation on Organised Crime, Corruption, Illegal Immigration and Counter-terrorism between the EU, the WB and relevant ENP countries

- The report itself indicates that there is progress as regards activities and cooperation between the relevant Member States, EU bodies, other players and WB Countries;
- Before producing the next report we need to find more productive and widespread mechanisms and standards for collecting data and producing a report.

Secondment of Common Immigration Liaison Officers to the Montenegro

- The Slovenian Ministry of Interior and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior applied to Commission for the secondment of Common Immigration Liaison Officers to the Montenegro;
- This ILO will be assigned by the applicant (Slovenia) and will work on behalf of Slovenia and Austria.

Secondment of Common Immigration Liaison Officers to the Montenegro-2

The delegated ILO will provide the two countries with information concerning:

- (1) prevention and combating of illegal immigration;
- (2) returning of illegal immigrants;
- (3) prevention and combating against organized crime;
- (4) strategic and operational tasks in the field of migration;
- (5) collecting information about all WB-related activities;
- (6) communicating with the LOs and coordinate all the necessary activities.

CONCLUSIONS

- Police co-operation in the WB is crucial for the EU and as well for the WB Countries;
- Without full international co-operation, it's not possible to disrupt criminal activities or dismantle cross-border OC groups;
- Targeting wholesale activities of the cross-border OC groups and retail operations linked to them also in other WB will reinforce one another to lessen the threat and reduce the harm.

Any questions?

**Thank you for
your kind
attention.**

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