

CTC Special Meeting with Regional and International Organisations

Vienna, 12 March 2004

Working Group 1: Preventing the Financing of Terrorism

Address on behalf of the European Union

REVISED DRAFT

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The European Union remains committed to then fight against terrorism in all its forms. The European Union Plan of Action on Terrorism, which was adopted by an Extraordinary European Council Meeting of 21 September 2001 set out the broad parameters of the EU, both internally and externally, in addressing this threat. Preventing the financing of terrorism is central to our overall strategy.

Security Council Resolution 1267 and related resolutions are implemented throughout the EU by Council Regulation 881 of 2002, which allows for the freezing of funds are other financial resources of persons and groups included on the 1267 Committee's Consolidated List.

Resolution 1373 mandates us to take action against the financing of all terrorist groups and activities. Council Regulation 2580 of 2001 and Common Position 931 of 2001 allows for the drawing up of a list of persons, groups and entities who are considered to be involved in terrorism and against whom specific restrictive measures, including the freezing of assets, can be taken. There are currently 45 individuals and 35 groups included on the list, which was most recently updated on 22 December 2003.

As well as names submitted by Member States, third countries may request that the EU include specific individuals and groups on its terrorist list. However, to comply with the rule of law, and due process, these requests must be accompanied by a substantial dossier of evidence showing that the request complies with the criteria set down in Common Position 931. In this regard, the EU relies heavily on the ability and willingness of third countries to exchange as much substantial information as possible in executing its mandate against the financing of terrorism under 1373. We are currently examining our own procedures and looking at how we can make the process of asset freezing more efficient, and we welcome suggestions on how procedures and mechanisms for the sharing of intelligence with third countries and with regional organisations can be improved.

In terms of other aspects of our external relations, the European Union also provides support to a number of countries in enhancing their capacity to combat terrorist financing. Pilot technical assistance projects, including support to Financial Intelligence Units, have been launched, through the European Commission, with a limited number of countries, and we hope to be in a position to expand these activities in the future. Assistance is also provided, on a bilateral basis, by a number of Member States.

The European Union recognizes that, given the transnational nature of the contemporary terrorist threat, it is only through global cooperation that we can successfully address it. Nowhere is this more true than in relation to financing. International, regional and subregional organisations have an important role to play in bringing states together to exchange information,

experience and best practice. In this regard, the EU, under the Italian Presidency, organized a workshop on the financing of terrorism in November 2003 with the participation of the Gulf Co-operation Council Countries. The workshop presented a valuable opportunity for EU and GCC Member States to present their domestic legislation and other measures adopted to counter the financing of terrorism and to further elaborate on the problems of the misuse of charitable organisations and alternative remittance systems. In conclusion, it was felt that terrorist financing should continue to be a regular issue in the political dialogue between the EU and GCC, through existing and all other available channels, including bilateral relations of Member States with these countries. It was also agreed that information should be exchanged on a regular basis with particular regard to the adoption of domestic measures, regulation of non-profit organisations, and monitoring and control of alternative remittance.

The Irish Presidency of the EU is committed to building on this excellent work. We are looking at how these conclusions can be operationalised and result in concrete achievements. We are also examining how the model set with this workshop with the GCC can be replicated in our relations with our regional bodies, as well as that it may be an important first step in terms of building a real and lasting global partnership against the financing of terrorism.

Before I conclude, I would just like to make you aware of the internal review of all aspects of the EU's counter-terrorist strategy which is currently underway. Like the 1267 Committee with the adoption of Resolution 1526 and the ongoing deliberations at the CTC, we feel that now this an

appropriate time to reexamine our priorities in the fight against terrorism, to take stock of progress to date and to set a concrete and practical strategy for the future. International cooperation will be crucial to this, and we look forward to submissions, suggestions and proposals from delegations as the day goes on, which we are sure will assist and inform the work of the European Union going forward.

Thank you very much.