

**Speech by Vice President Kallas in the plenary joint debate on
body scanners and the operation on intelligence services in the
context of counter-terrorism strategies**

Wednesday, 10 February 2010

Dear Mr President,
Honourable members,
Your excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Safety and security of passengers is the major priority for me as
Transport Commissioner, for our common transport policy.**

The attempted terrorist attack on North West Airlines flight 253 to Detroit on 25th December has again confirmed the reality of the threat to civil aviation.

I would like to stress that existing EU standards on aviation security were correctly implemented on 25 December at Amsterdam Schiphol airport.

The incident showed first of all the failure of intelligence, failure "to connect the dots".

Aviation remains a target for terrorists. We cannot ignore this fact.

Aviation security must therefore be guaranteed by all appropriate means, in full compliance with fundamental rights. The travelling public, the media, and aviation stakeholders all legitimately ask us

whether the existing security arrangements are good enough or whether we need to take further action.

In this regard, today the new screening technologies, so called body scanners are discussed everywhere.

Regarding the use of "body scanners" at airports, aviation security experts are of the opinion that these machines have better detection capacity than current screening equipment.

But how big is the added value of these machines to airport security and what are the consequences for health and privacy, is not yet entirely clear today.

As noted previously by the Parliament in 2008, the use of "body imaging technology" raises a number of questions, notably in relation to privacy, data protection and health.

I intend to present to you in April a report on imaging technology and its use at EU airports. This report will address the questions raised in the EP Resolution from 2008.

We need to look at these questions seriously. We also need to make up our minds on whether these concerns are better addressed at national or at the European level.

To my mind, an EU framework would be better. I say this based on our experience of a common approach since 9/11, and with a view to the efficiency of the Single Market for aviation. An EU framework guarantees uniform standards, in relation both to security and to respect for individual rights.

Finally, I would like to underline that airport security is a much larger question than the introduction of a new screening technology. To fight terrorism targeting civil aviation we need large variety of combined and coordinated measures – intelligence, profiling, different search methods and international cooperation. Body scanners are not the panacea.

I am looking forward to your views and thank you for your attention.