

# SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC

17TH PARLIAMENTARY TERM

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## RESOLUTION OF THE FIRST STANDING COMMITTEE

(Constitutional affairs, affairs of the Prime Minister's Office and home affairs, general legal system of the State and the civil service)

*(Rapporteur MAZZONI)*

*approved at the session of 6 July 2016*

ON THE

**JOINT COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL ‘JOINT FRAMEWORK ON COUNTERING HYBRID THREATS - A EUROPEAN UNION RESPONSE’ (JOIN(2016) 18 final) (EU DOCUMENT NO 131)**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL ‘DELIVERING ON THE EUROPEAN AGENDA ON SECURITY TO FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM AND PAVE THE WAY TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE AND GENUINE SECURITY UNION’ (COM(2016) 230 final) (EU DOCUMENT NO 142)**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL ‘STRONGER AND SMARTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR BORDERS AND SECURITY’ (COM(2016) 205 final) (EU DOCUMENT NO 144)**

*pursuant to Article 144(1) and (6) of the Rules of Procedure*

**Submitted to the President's Office on 8 July 2016**

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The Committee,

having examined, pursuant to Article 144(1) and (6) of the Rules of Procedure, the Joint Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council 'Joint framework on countering hybrid threats - a European Union Response' (JOIN(2016) 18 final); the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council 'Delivering on the European Agenda on Security to fight against terrorism and pave the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union' (COM(2016) 230 final); and the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, 'Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and Security', (COM(2016) 205 final).

whereas:

recent years have shown the need for the European Union to adapt and increase its capacities as a security provider, with a strong focus on the close relationship between external and internal security;

Following the invitation from the Foreign Affairs Council of 18 May 2015, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in close cooperation with Commission services and the European Defence Agency (EDA), and in consultation with the EU Member States, undertook the work to present this joint framework with actionable proposals to help counter hybrid threats and foster the resilience of the EU and Member States, as well as partners. In June 2015, the European Council recalled the need to mobilise EU instruments to help counter hybrid threats;

whereas:

this Joint Communication describes the set of measures to be taken at European level to counter threats of a hybrid nature understood as a mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare;

this Joint Communication aims to facilitate a holistic approach that will enable the EU, in coordination with Member States, specifically to counter threats of a hybrid nature by creating synergies between all relevant instruments and fostering close cooperation between all relevant actors. The actions build on existing strategies and sectoral policies aimed at strengthening security;

considering, in particular, that:

the issue raised is the need to develop security risk assessment methodologies to promote the formulation of specific policies in areas ranging from aviation security to terrorist financing and money laundering;

the importance of protecting critical infrastructure with the aim of preventing economic or societal disruption is also highlighted. Through the actions, the Commission, in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders, will identify common tools to improve the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure against hybrid threats in relevant sectors such as energy networks, transport and space infrastructure;

public health and food security could also be jeopardised by hybrid threats. Action in this area involves reinforcing existing EU structures for health security, environmental protection and food safety;

with regard to cybersecurity, the Commission encourages Member States to establish and utilise networks and frameworks for strategic cooperation in order to prevent and counter cyberattacks in the energy, financial services and transport sectors;

building resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism is envisaged. In addition to implementing the actions set out in the European Agenda on Security, the Commission is analysing the need to reinforce procedures for removing illegal content from the internet, calling on intermediaries' due diligence in managing networks and system;

with a view to preventing and responding to crises, the High Representative and the Commission, in coordination with the Member States will establish a common operational protocol and carry out regular exercises to improve strategic decision-making ability in response to complex hybrid threats building on the Crisis Management and Integrated Political Crisis Response procedures;

as regards the EU's cooperation with NATO, the importance of sharing the same situational awareness picture before and during a crisis is stressed, emphasising also the importance of building mutual awareness of each other's respective crisis management procedures to ensure swift and effective reactions;

considering, moreover, that:

the Communication 'delivering on the European Agenda on Security to fight against terrorism and pave the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union' (COM(2016) 230 final) aims to assess specific operational issues and identify where there are implementation gaps in the fight against terrorism and identify what action is still needed to deal with these gaps; it also aims to develop new standing cooperation structures between operational services responsible for combating terrorism.

the Communication on stronger and smarter information systems for borders and security (COM(2016) 205 final) lists a series of proposals aimed at improving existing information systems and introducing new ones.

calls on the Government:

to support the role played by the High Representative in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European External Action Service in whose name they perform their duties in applying the Joint Framework to counter hybrid threats;

to identify the European approach as the obvious one for developing an

appropriate cybersecurity strategy as part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and with the involvement of the European Defence Agency (EDA);

to provide for more stringent controls on social media, by adopting appropriate measures aimed at facilitating the immediate removal of pages and accounts containing terrorist propaganda, as part of an overall action to build resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism while safeguarding the free circulation and usability of legal content;

to diversify as far as possible the EU's energy sources, suppliers and routes in order to provide more secure energy supplies and to ensure that there are no interruptions to energy supply;

to support the single digital market, improving the resilience of communication and information systems in Europe in order to prevent cyberattacks which could disrupt digital services across the EU;

to step up efforts in combating the financing of crime and terrorism by strengthening the European anti-money laundering framework in order to identify and block suspicious money transfers with particular focus on the money transfer system, while reviewing the current legislative framework which is not conducive to providing adequate knowledge of all the operators in the sector;

to accelerate the implementation of the commitments undertaken as part of the EU's fight against hybrid threats, with particular regard to the measures set out in the European Agenda on Security to fight against terrorism and pave the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union.

**OPINION OF THE FOURTH STANDING COMMITTEE**

(DEFENCE)

(Rapporteur: BATTISTA)

**on EU Document No 131**

18 May 2016

The Committee,

having positively evaluated the EU document

hereby issues a favourable opinion, within its area of competence, with the following comments:

stresses the need to support the role played by the High Representative in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European External Action Service, in whose name they perform their duties in applying the Joint Framework to counter hybrid threads;

with reference to point 4.4, highlights the need to identify the European approach as the obvious one for developing an appropriate cybersecurity strategy as part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with the involvement of the European Defence Agency (EDA);

with reference to point 4.6, emphasises the advantage of having more stringent controls on social media, by adopting appropriate measures aimed at facilitating the immediate removal of pages and accounts containing terrorist propaganda.

