

European Commission - Statement

Commissioners Avramopoulos and Bulc at the Paris meeting on cross-border cooperation against terrorism and for rail security

Paris, 29 August 2015

EU Commissioners Avramopoulos and Bulc attended a European Transport and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting on cross-border cooperation against terrorism and for rail security.

EU Commissioners Dimitris Avramopoulos and Violeta Bulc attended a European Transport and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting on cross-border cooperation against terrorism and for rail security. This meeting was called following the thwarted Amsterdam to Paris Thalys train attack and gathered EU Affairs and Transport Ministers (from Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), as well as Gilles de Kerchove, the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange experiences and to identify potential additional security measures at national and at European level.

Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said: "The attack in the Thalys shows that we must resolutely fight criminal and terrorist acts that endanger our security, values and freedoms. Terrorism knows no borders. We must act together by enhancing transnational and European cooperation. This is the time for us to show we are fully determined to implement the provisions of the European Security Agenda."

Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc said: "The security and safety of passengers is our first priority. But of course we must not overreact. It is essential that, as far as possible, public transport remains open and easily accessible. Security must be proportionate to the threat. The statement adopted today will give new impetus for enhancing rail security. The Commission will now work very closely with the EU Member States and industry experts in order to find ways of enhancing cross-border rail security in a proportionate manner."

Next steps:

Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos is committed to working together with all Member States and with the European Parliament on the implementation of the European Security Agenda.

The European Commission is speeding up the presentation of initiatives related to detention and to the disabling of weapons.

The swift adoption of the Passenger Name Record Directive will also be essential to detect movements of foreign fighters more efficiently.

The Schengen rules allow for all necessary measures to be taken to ensure the security of citizens without undermining their freedom of movement.

These possibilities should be used to their full, on the basis of the indicators and guidelines developed by the Commission.

The European Counter Terrorist Centre will be quickly established within Europol to reinforce the exchange of information and the coordination between competent national authorities.

The Commission continues its actions against radicalisation. On 2 December 2015, the first European Forum with internet service providers will be held to enhance cooperation on counter terrorism.

Commissioner Violeta Bulc has asked the land transport security expert group (LANDSEC) to discuss current best practices in rail security and if additional measures could or should be taken at EU level going forward. The next meeting of the expert group will take place on 11 September 2015.

Commissioner Violeta Bulc has agreed with Luxembourg Transport Minister François Bausch to discuss rail security at the next meeting of the EU Transport Ministers in October in Luxembourg. This will be the appropriate forum to determine whether there is a need for legislative action at the EU level.

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