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EDITORIAL



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Editorial

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Dear Readers,

Security is among Europeans' key concerns in 2015.¹ Even though ensuring internal security lies primarily with the Member States, the new and more complex threats that have emerged require further synergies at all levels. The European Agenda on Security presented by the Commission on 28 April 2015 highlights the EU's added value to Member States' actions. It underlines that the EU needs a solid criminal justice response to terrorism, covering investigation and prosecution of those who plan terrorist acts or are suspected of recruitment, training, and financing of terrorism as well as incitement to commit a terrorist offence.

As Justice Commissioner, my focus will therefore be on the following five priorities in the implementation of the European Agenda on Security:

Combat extremism and radicalisation

EU action against terrorism needs to address extremism through preventive measures and to draw on common European values of tolerance, diversity, and mutual respect. The Commission will ensure that laws tackling racism and xenophobia are correctly enforced. We will also support actions to combat online hate speech.

Make effective use of cooperation between all law-enforcement actors

Working together better means that all actors involved fully implement existing instruments, including the European Investigation Order. I plan to accelerate the work already under way to include the data of non-EU nationals in the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS). I will also encourage national judges to use Eurojust and Joint Investigation Teams more often and to take full advantage of the European Judicial Network. Finally, establishing the European Public Prosecutor's Office will help prevent fraud against the EU budget.

Reinforce the prevention of radicalisation, especially in detention facilities

While detention issues fall mainly under the competence of the Member States, the risk of radicalisation and recruitment of potential terrorists in prison is real. I aim to organise a high-level conference on how to deal with radicalised offenders in detention in autumn 2015. We also need alternatives to detention, especially for young people vulnerable to radicalisation.

Combat terrorist financing more effectively

The recently agreed Anti-Money Laundering Directive² will help trace suspicious transfers of money and facilitate the information exchange between Financial Intelligence Units and authorities. I will also look into the freezing and confiscation of criminal assets, including by extending mutual recognition instruments to all forms of confiscation.

Adapt the legislative framework in full respect of fundamental rights

The European Union is founded upon democratic values. All security measures must be in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and comply with the principles of necessity, proportionality, and legality. Moreover, common rules on data protection will enable law enforcement and judicial authorities to cooperate more effectively with one another as well as build confidence and ensure legal certainty. An agreement by the end of 2015 on the Data Protection reform as a whole is crucial, particularly on the proposal for a Data Protection Directive for police and criminal justice authorities.

Through this shared EU agenda, I urge all actors, EU institutions, national authorities, and EU agencies to work together in a spirit of mutual trust. We will stand firm on fundamental rights and work to address the root causes of radicalisation.

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1. Eurobarometer on European attitudes toward security http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_432_en.pdf.↵
 2. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/civil/news/150210_en.htm.↵
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Editorially reviewed articles published in English, French, or German, are complemented by timely news and analysis of legal and policy developments across Europe.

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