

**Statement to the Security Council of the United Nations
on the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)
by Mr. Marc Bichler,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations,
on behalf of the European Union**

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia¹ and the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. President,

First of all, I wish to express my appreciation on behalf of the European Union to Ambassador Denisov, Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) for his comprehensive briefing on the activities carried out by the Committee during the last three months and on the work program for the next 90 days, which the EU fully supports.

The European Union looks very much forward to continuing the good cooperation with the standing and new members of the CTC. I also would like to thank Mr. Rupérez for his valuable efforts since he took over the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED). The European Union is looking forward to the CTED becoming fully operational during the current 90-day period.

The European Union continues to attach great importance to the open debates of the Security Council on the issue of counter-terrorism, and in particular on the work of this Committee. They contribute to strengthen the general acceptance and legitimacy of the CTC among all the members of the UN family.

Mr. President,

While the European Union actively supports your call on all states that have not submitted their reports on time, to submit them as soon as possible, we would like to focus today on three aspects which the European Union believes deserve particular attention.

Firstly, the development of a comprehensive strategy to fight terrorism.

At its summit meeting in Brussels in December 2004, the European Union reiterated its determination to combat the continued threat of terrorism through a comprehensive and integrated approach, reinforcing both internal and international cooperation, in accordance with the principles on which the European Union is founded.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The European Union also reiterated its conviction that in order to be effective in the long run, the Union's response to terrorism must address the root causes of terrorism. As radicalization and recruitment can be closely connected, the European Union has decided to establish by June 2005 a long-term strategy and action plan on both issues.

In this context, the European Union welcomes the recommendations concerning counter-terrorism put forward in the High-level Panel report on threats, challenges and change with regard to the major role the UN should take in promoting a comprehensive strategy to fight terrorism, namely:

- the urgent need to complete negotiations on the comprehensive convention on terrorism;
- the particular value of achieving, as soon as possible, consensus on a legal definition of "terrorism";
- the urgency to achieve the universal ratification and implementation of all international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols;
- the necessity to facilitate assistance to those who need it in order to increase their capacity to prevent terrorism;
- closer coordination with all UN bodies and all other actors in the global counter-terrorism effort.

Through its counter-terrorism coordinator, Mr. Gijs de Vries, the European Union is currently working to promote greater coordination between the various EU counter-terrorism initiatives, policies and activities.

Mr. President,

The second aspect I would like to raise today is related to due process.

The European Union is convinced that efforts to combat terrorism must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. Counter-terrorism actions must at all times be accompanied by respect of due process and the rule of law. There can be no trade off between human rights and effective security measures; indeed the respect for human rights must remain an integral part of any global counter-terrorism strategy.

In this context, the European Union welcomes the fact that a human rights expert will be one of the main advisers of the Executive Director. We expect this expert to increase the profile of human rights and the rule of law within the CTED as well as in its contacts with other UN bodies dealing with human rights and in its outreach to the Member States.

In the same context, the European Union also welcomes the recommendation of the High-level Panel to institute a process for reviewing the cases of those claiming to have been wrongly

placed or retained on the al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee's watch-list. Such a process could also benefit the work of other Sanctions Committees.

Mr. President,

My third point is relating to a more pro-active role of the CTC in its outreach to the outside world.

The European Union welcomes the fact that the CTC and the CTED will enhance and broaden their dialogue with Member States and with international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

We welcome the fact that the first visit by the CTC to one of the UN Member States is now scheduled for March 2005. We also welcome the upcoming fourth special meeting of the CTC with international, regional and sub-regional organizations in Almaty, Kazakhstan, held in cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States. The European Union will be actively participating in this very important meeting.

The development of a set of best practices, in consultation with relevant UN bodies, in particular the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, and other international, regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as the provision of technical assistance will also be facilitated and better tailored to the Member States real needs through a direct dialogue. The European Union, for its part, is actively pursuing its outreach to third countries, in particular through visits and a direct dialogue, including the possibility of technical assistance.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude by commending the Chairman of the CTC on his work, as he has very pointedly identified the priorities for the three month ahead and by reinsuring you, Mr. President, that the European Union remains firmly committed to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1373, as well as all other counter-terrorism related resolutions of the Security Council.