



Republic of Turkey  
Prime Ministry  
Undersecretariat of Public  
Order and Security

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION IN  
COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**24 – 25 October 2013, Istanbul, Turkey**

**SUMMARY BY THE CHAIR**

It is a bitter experience that terrorists only need to be lucky once in order to succeed – States need to be lucky every time in order to protect their citizens against terrorist attacks.

One of the most efficient tools in fighting terrorism, and one that strongly diminishes the need for depending on sheer luck, is effective coordination: bringing together the many efforts of different actors at national and international levels to hinder terrorist acts and bring terrorists to justice.

The three Sessions of the Conference, each focusing on various aspects of coordination in counter-terrorism, have brought to light the various challenges facing both States and inter-governmental and supranational Organisations, with regard to the coordination of the relevant actors in preventing and suppressing terrorism.

The excellent presentations have pointed to examples of successful experiences and modalities for States with regard to organising their domestic coordination – modalities which may indeed serve as models, both regionally in Europe and at the global level.

**Session I** on the organisation and general role of national counter-terrorism coordination bodies clearly demonstrated that a prerequisite for combating terrorism successfully is to have in place a comprehensive national strategy, which not only focuses on the tactical roles of law enforcement and security agencies and key ministries, but takes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to the phenomenon of terrorism and how to combat it while respecting human rights and the rule of law.



Bringing together the experience and insights of law enforcement and security officials, civilian policy makers, researchers from academia and representatives of civil society is a novel and highly interesting concept in counter-terrorism coordination, which is proving its worth. Session I also touched on the challenges involved in the proliferation of actors and strategies in the field of counter-terrorism – both at national and international levels – often encountered as a side effect of facing a serious and continued terrorist threat.

**Session II** dealt with the specific role of national counter-terrorism bodies in the preparation, implementation and review of national counter-terrorism strategies. The importance of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the United Nations as the main guideline for tailoring national counter-terrorism strategies was emphasized. It was agreed that counter-terrorism strategies, in addition to having a broad vision and a holistic approach, should also be agile and adaptable to the changing *modus operandi* of terrorists. Such strategies must always be based on respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy and the measures outlined in them should be proportionate. It was pointed out, that establishing contacts and coordination, not only between the competent public authorities, but also between these public authorities and civil society, is a prerequisite for being able to prevent and combat terrorism effectively. Indeed, civil society plays a key role in counteracting terrorist messages and acceptance of measures taken by public authorities to prevent terrorism is essential for any counter-terrorism strategy to succeed. In this respect, good practices of preventive “social” measures, involving notably social, education, sports and other relevant activities were mentioned. Similarly, the importance of regularly reviewing counter-terrorism strategies on the basis of research and the need for a certain level of prioritisation of threats was underlined.

**Session III** highlighted the challenges faced in international coordination in counter-terrorism – not only between States – but also between the various inter-governmental and supranational Organisations involved, both at global, regional, and sub-regional levels. These Organisations provide a platform for international cooperation and coordination, both as regards policy making and at the practical level. They are sometimes also the originators and repositories of international legal standards governing different aspects of counter-terrorism efforts. The need for these Organisations of adding value to the cooperation between States and of avoiding duplication of tasks and projects was stressed. This should be done by further deepening and strengthening cooperation between them, in particular as regards sharing of information and general coordination. In addition, it was pointed out that not only States, but also inter-governmental and supranational Organisations have to interact with civil society to counter terrorist messages. The importance of engaging private media actors in discussions with States on how to report on terrorism without providing a podium for the terrorists to disseminate their messages and spread fear was underlined, and the particular role of inter-governmental Organisations in facilitating such discussions was emphasised.



In conclusion, the Chair and the Participants in the Conference expressed their gratitude to Turkey for its lavish hospitality and for co-organising and hosting this important event in Istanbul.