

Commission: OSCE

Subject: « Towards a strategy of cooperation between the OSCE and the European Union to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare ? »

Author: Republic of Armenia

The Republic of Armenia is a representative parliamentary democratic republic with a population of 3 million, currently led by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, head of the Civil Contract party, defined as centrist. It is a landlocked country situated in West Asia, and a part of the Caucasus region. Armenia is and has been an independent republic since its separation from the Soviet Union in 1991, and joined the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) shortly after in 1992. To this day, it is a permanent member of the Minsk Group within the organization, mostly focused on finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with its bordering country to the east, Azerbaijan. Mainly due to this, Armenia is dedicated to and supports the effort that is being made to form a strategy of cooperation between the OSCE and the European Union to counter cyberwarfare and terrorism.

Terrorism has been and still is a largely discussed issue by organizations such as the European Union or the OSCE. We have seen a colossal rise of it in the last few years, all over the world: solely between 2000 and 2014, more than 61,000 incidents of non-state terrorism have been recorded, resulting in at least 140,000 deaths.

With the arrival of The Internet and its popularization in the last few years has arrived a new widely known form of terrorism called cyberterrorism. With it have emerged cyberattacks and cyberwarfare as well, creating an entire new dimension of possible international threat.

Armenia has been considerably affected by terrorism throughout its history, but is essentially concerned by it as a consequence of the above-mentioned Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is an ethnic and territorial conflict between our country and Azerbaijan, over the disputed region. Azerbaijan, with the help of Turkey, has been conducting numerous attacks to the region, endangering the lives of many civilians, and the presence of terrorist fighters and mercenaries in the area has been thoroughly confirmed. There have been numerous violations of the international law, with the use of prohibited weapons and terrorist offenses. Azerbaijan has furthermore violated the ceasefire.

Armenia has taken various measures to counter terrorism. On March 22nd 2005, the law on the fight against terrorism was adopted, defining the legal and organisational grounds for the fight against terrorism in the Republic of Armenia and regulating relations pertaining to carrying out fight against terrorism. Article 217 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia condemns terrorism with imprisonment. Likewise, Armenia actively participates in organisations against such crimes and has signed a series of treaties against terrorism, several of them based on inter-state cooperation. Armenia has signed and ratified the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and its Amending Protocol. It has signed the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, which was ratified on August 30, 2016, and many others, with organizations such as the NATO, the CSTO, or the BSEC. Armenia has also signed bilateral agreements on cooperation in criminal issues, including issues relating to terrorism and organized crime with many countries, Bulgaria, the USA, Lithuania, Georgia or Greece for instance.

Armenia has maintained a good relationship with both Russia (mainly in the wake of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict) and the European Union (France, for example) throughout its history, thus our country could be fully involved in easing the communication between the two if considered necessary.

In September 2006, as follow-up to the Regulation on the organisation and realisation of joint antiterrorism activities in the territories of CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States, made up of Russia and ex USSR members) Member States (signed on 7 October 2002, ratified on 8 December 2004) Armenia hosted the "Atom-Antiterror-2006" training sessions. Armenia has made a significant contribution to the creation of the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the CIS Member States and its database.

The overall goal of Armenia is to participate in the fight to counter terrorism and any kind of cyberwarfare. For this, Armenia strongly believes that collaboration is of utmost importance to effectively eliminate all threats. We have been taking a large number of practical measures to combat this issue. Therefore, our country is prepared, willing and fully committed to taking part in the cooperation between the EU and the OSCE, as well as any other forms of cooperation., bearing in mind the importance of protecting the rights and freedom of all citizens.

The Republic of Armenia strongly condemns and is unquestionably against any form of terrorism, as well as cyberwarfare, and maintains that a global coalition is crucial, as all States need to be united in the fight against terrorism.