

Commission: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council (OSCE)

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

Author: Malta and Cyprus

Malta is an archipelago made up of eight islands, the most important of which is the Island of Malta. Located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, its neighbors are Italy to the North, Tunisia to the East and Libya to the South. Formerly a British colony, Malta gained independence and is currently a Parliamentary Republic headed by a center-left Prime Minister (Labor Party).

Cyprus is an island located at the far East of the Mediterranean Sea, seventy-four kilometers to the east of the Anatolian Peninsula, near Egypt, Lebanon, and Greece. Similarly, to Malta, Cyprus gained its independence from the British Empire and is currently a presidential republic, governed by a liberal pro-European President. However, following its independence, Cyprus was divided into two zones, the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish held northern part of the island. Both Malta and Cyprus joined the European Union in May 2004.

Due to their geographic position, Malta and Cyprus are gateways to the European Union. When combatting terrorism, it's important to keep in mind that most devastating attacks come from countries where ISIS, Al-Qaeda or Daesh are established. Particularly Cyprus is near these Islamic prone countries. Malta is also concerned in this issue, since, again, due to geography, the immigrant flux that passes through Malta and Cyprus and then head to Lampedusa or Greece is also coming from these nations, nations with unstable regimes, prone to terrorist-like actions or violence. However, in the spirit of non-discrimination as stated in the Helsinki Act, and in both the Maltese statement to the UN and the Cypriot report on terrorism, when enhancing counterterrorism and countering cyberwarfare, no person shall be discriminated against for where they come from or what religion they have.

Furthermore, with security threats having increased over the past decade, these same threats have grown exponentially, and are no longer confined to a single territory, and the ever-growing Internet has made access, cooperation and coordination of terrorist and cyberattacks easier.

Moreover, there is also work needed to be done in the field of prejudice. As stated above, in our effort combating terrorism, the OSCE, and by extension the Republics of Malta and Cyprus believe that no person shall be accused of attempt to destabilize a country, person or society simply based on ethnicity, religion, or nationality, as it violates both human and civil and civil rights (such as discrimination).

The Republic of Malta, despite not having any major attacks on sovereign soil in the past ten years, strongly supports cooperation in the field of countering terrorism and cyberwarfare. Malta believes in the sharing of information, expertise, and resources when it comes to strengthen international cooperation, particularly within the members of the OSCE. Malta has signed thirteen United Nation accords and three Council of Europe Conventions regarding counterterrorism and furthermore increased their policy following the tragic September 11th, 2001, attacks, regarding the selling of arms and the sheltering of terrorists.

The Republic of Cyprus has a precarious relationship with its neighboring Turkish Cyprus, having no diplomatic connections with them. Despite this, the government considers that the terrorism threat to the country remains low. The Cypriot government considers counterterrorism a priority. With this goal in mind, Cyprus has largely and extensively cooperated with the European Union and its other partners.

The Republic of Malta and The Republic of Cyprus are both signatories of the Helsinki Act that gave birth to the OSCE. They thus share all the core values and missions of the organization, whether it be peace keeping, human rights defense or counterterrorism. Both these countries have also signed many pertinent United Nation and European Union Acts Countering Terrorism and Cyberwarfare, such as an ambitious Euro-Mediterranean peace-keeping initiative known as the Barcelona Process (2008).

As for solutions, Malta and Cyprus have implemented numerous protocols going back to 1963. Malta has been a party to 16 out of the 19 Universal Anti-Terrorism Conventions and Protocols, and Cyprus to 14. Both Malta and Cyprus are advocates for the sharing of information, resources, international partners, all these measures to increase security. For example, they recommend further developing institutions such as Europol, Eurojust or Frontex. The OSCE and thus the European Union, Malta and Cyprus believe that our focus when combatting terrorism and cyberwarfare is addressing that root causes or factors that lead to radicalization. In the EU report on Strategic Commitment, the goal set on

all its members is “to combat terrorism globally while respecting human rights, and make Europe safer, allowing its citizens to live in an area of freedom, security and justice”.

In conclusion, the Republic of Malta and the Republic of Cyprus have counterterrorism and counter cyberwarfare at the center of their domestic policy. Malta and Cyprus greatly support the European Union, and their effort in securing peace, justice, equity, and other core values, in the hope of securing a better future, with the help of the international community, the UN and the OSCE.