

**Country:** Lithuania

**Committee:** OSCE : Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council

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

Today's Lithuania is located on the shores of the Baltic Sea and is bordered to the northwest by the great Russian steppe, to the north by Latvia, to the south by Poland and to the west by the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. It became an independent state in 1991, after gaining independence from the USSR, and in 2004 joined the European Union. The country is a parliamentary, independent, multiparty republic, and today is led by the head of state, Gitanas Nausėda. Lithuania is very active in the European Union with 11 seats in the European Parliament.

Lithuania has been collaborating with the OSCE, as all EU Member States are participants in this organization. Both institutions cooperate in issues related to the work in strategic areas of interest, including conflict prevention and mediation, preventing/countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism; countering trafficking in small arms and light weapons, cyber/ICT threats, cybercrime linked to organized crime, rule of law and democratic institutions, election support and co-operation on uranium legacy sites. The country is severely affected by the latter issue.

According to institutional data, in 2020 the number of cyber security incidents had increased 25 percent from 2019, and the number of incidents related to the spread of malware jumped by as much as 49 percent the same year. Focusing on incidents linked specifically to Russia, cyber groups controlled by Russian intelligence services carried out cyber attacks on Lithuania's top government, foreign policy and national security institutions, energy and education establishments, and also used Lithuania's infrastructure to carry out attacks abroad. Some attacks disclosed by Russian intelligence services' cyber spying group APT29 in July 2020 against a Western organization creating Covid-19 vaccines were carried out using Lithuania's IT infrastructure, on which covid-19 has had unavoidable impact as well. When we look into the correlation between the rise in the number of cyber security incidents and lockdown restrictions, that correlation is very obvious, especially during the first lockdown (March 2020).

Furthermore, cyberattacks also affect citizens, some data from the Association of Lithuanian Banks shows that Lithuanian residents suffered damage worth around 4.5 million euros last year due to cyber-electronic crimes. Lithuanian intelligence services, in their annual report, say cyber attacks have moved from being mainly targeted at financial crimes to more political spying on state institutions.

And finally, Lithuania's central bank has told the country's banks to prepare for power cuts and cyberattacks as Russia's standoff with Ukraine risks spilling over into a military conflict. Perhaps, the country would be severely affected by cyber-attacks, sooner than we might expect.

Lithuania is aware of this huge gap in the cybersecurity of the public sector. To counter terrorism and cyberterrorism threats the Republic of Lithuania has developed and implemented numerous legal and organisational measures. While seeking to ensure the effectiveness of these counter terrorism measures, the Republic of Lithuania gives due consideration to the protection of human rights and the rule of law. In 2005, the national security strategy was approved by the CODEXTER, a Lithuania's profile on Counter-Terrorist Capacity by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, which states that terrorism poses a serious threat to the security of the international community and hence the security of the Republic of Lithuania. Besides, the ARAS or Lithuanian Police Anti-terrorist Operations Unit ARAS specialized police unit established in 1991, ARAS's purpose is to suppress organized crime groups, they handle riot suppression, peace keep, and escort. In December 2004 the unit was admitted into the ATLAS Network of special counter-terrorist police units of the European Union countries. In addition to this measures, Lithuania sign a Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in 199 and was amended in 2017.

Lithuania proposes to strengthen the ongoing cooperation between the two organizations that could improve institutional interaction and furthering co-operation between the OSCE and the EU in areas of common interest across all three OSCE security dimensions – politico-military, economic and environmental and human solutions. Lithuania considers that a particular emphasis must be put on two precise propositions. Firstly, in order to eliminate or reduce cyber-attacks and menaces coming from its main Russian suspicious enemy, we think that a charter would be the solution to improve the

diplomatic relations between our country and Russia, a member of the "troika" of the OSCE Minsk Group . This charter would consist of a mutual and beneficial agreement between the two sides, we demand co-operation on both sides to detect and warn of any possible threat. Secondly, Lithuania proposes to develop training cycles in private companies to remedy this lack of reaction, in the face of a cyber-terrorist attack. CYBERGYM provides cyber readiness solutions, grounded in highly-impactful cyber-training programs, run at state-of-the-art training facilities. We need to seek help from international organizations, and courts in order to interfere and discipline governments that infringe peace, in a nonviolent way.

Overall, Lithuania, is in favor of a further co-operation between the OSCE, the UE and Lithuania on conflict prevention and conflict resolution, in order to build a future free of terrorism and cyberattacks. Lithuania demands to consider this, as an international issue, not only affecting politics, but affecting all of us as human beings, and as such should be discussed regularly. Lithuania is open to participate in all kinds of debates concerning global issues such as terrorism and cyberwarefare security.

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