

Commission: OSCE : Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council

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

Author: Serbia

Since the beginning of Serbia's European union membership talks, Serbia has been focusing on building strong and independent democratic institutions. Serbia is ruled by the Serbian Progressive Party, under the president Aleksandar Vucic, which advocates the accession of Serbia into the European Union while maintaining the balance between the Eastern and Western powers. The parliamentary republic is headed by the prime minister Ana Brnabic. Both coincide in the necessity of reinforcing their cybersecurity programs to benefit their own citizens and Balkan neighbours. Hence, the current focus on developing their network security while, at the same time, countering terrorism. That being the case, Serbia strongly agrees with the need to develop a strategy of cooperation between such influential institutions, like the OSCE and the European Union, to fight cyberwarfare and terrorism.

At present, the entire planet is immersed in this new and fast changing cyber world. The active dispute between the world powers affects this area. Technology is evolving every single day and we need to adapt to it. The problem is that as a society we aren't fully aware of the importance of cybersecurity. There is a need to raise awareness about the risks that society can face when attacked by hackers. Like most countries, Serbia has been working on their cybersecurity systems for years. More than 50% of the population have access to the internet and therefore, rely on IT networks to function daily. Even if Serbia performs well across many areas of cybersecurity, the country is not immune to cyber attacks. Just this year, in February, the Serbian branch of Raiffeisen Bank suffered an assault as fraudulent messages were sent to clients. Last year, personal data belonging to millions of citizens was leaked from the database of the Serbian Business Register Agency.

The use of the internet in Serbia comes as a risk, seeing as a countrywide cyber attack could result in the direct loss of more than 10 million Euros per day. A large nation attack could damage Serbia's economy, causing the country a huge stepback stability wise. It would also impact sectors like security agencies and health services. It is important to understand that cybersecurity plays a big role in protecting each individual besides national sovereignty. Whilst Serbia is in rank 18 in the National cyber security index, it still has room for improvement. Currently the country does not have operational or legislative mechanisms to deal with cyber threats. On top of this, Serbia lacks a Computer Emergency response team (CERT) to provide rapid response to cyber incidents. Having a CERT would help regional cooperation in the field of cyber security. Meanwhile, Serbia has shown initiative to fight against terrorism. Its troubled past with the Yugoslavian desintegration and Kosovo conflict, have fortified the importance of stopping tensions that lead to terrorist attacks. In order to pacify any possible conflicts, Serbia pleades the necessity to fight terrorism. The nation wishes to guarantee a safer and more democratic space for all citizens. Currently Serbia is emphasising the need for authorities, to fight against the right wing extremism that threatens Europe.

Serbia is highly interested in cooperating with other European countries. Partnership between the OSCE and the European Union, would greatly benefit Serbia, and help develop advanced and diversified computer security systems. A collaboration would advantage every single country, and blossom into improved relations between the countries. As a matter of fact, Serbia is already engaged in the fight to stop terrorism. In November of 2021, a national seminar was held in Belgrade, to discuss preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. It aimed to review Serbia's National Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Terrorism for 2017-2021, and develop the new strategy for 2022. Contributors included civil society, the security sector and other government representatives, as well as members of international organisations such as OSCE, EU and the UN. They stressed the importance of developing security policies and activities with youth input. The seminar concluded in emphasising the urgency of collaboration between government and civil society to develop solutions ensuring international human rights and preventing violent extremism and terrorist recruitment. Additionally, Serbia is a member of the global coalition to defeat ISIS. Furthermore, Serbia has been collaborating with the OSCE since 2001. The OSCE mission to Serbia operates in the areas of rule of law and human rights; law enforcement; democratisation; and media development. Consequently, helping the country build more independent, strong and democratic

institutions. In 2015 it accentuated the strategic importance of cybersecurity for Serbia's society, and worked on innovating more modern network systems.

The main goal of the Serbs is the expansion of cybersecurity while, concomitantly, countering terrorism. In essence, the country needs a joint effort with European partners in order to realise their main objective. So, Serbia proposes an international correspondence to fight cyberwarfare. The country offers to establish a cybersecurity hub, situated in the capital, Belgrade, promoting the importance of computer security. The establishment could be a focal point for research and development on the matter, innovating and working on more efficient network security structures. Training of cybersecurity workforces, staff, police, engineers and informaticians would be provided by OSCE and EU internet security experts. On top of that, it would create more occupations, thus helping solve the unemployment crisis in Serbia and the Eurozone. This would assist the current misinformation problems, raising awareness on the crucial substance of cybersecurity in a larger part of the population. This network security pole shall obtain the safety of citizens. It will avoid attacks directed at businesses and institutions from the financial or productive sectors that could generate economic crises. It is essential to note that small businesses are the most affected by cyber attacks. For the purpose of releasing this project, financial aid is needed. A budget would be arranged and countries that are members of the European Union and the OSCE would invest both money and resources. With the necessary funds, this cybersecurity centre would be able to develop and innovate powerful and more effective safety devices. The nation strongly believes that this alliance would help Serbia develop its economic sectors simultaneously pioneering Europe's cybersecurity operations. Besides, it would of course succour combat cyber terrorism and help appease tensions in the Balkan region.

A collaboration between the OSCE and the European Union holds great potential for the future of citizen's safety. The joint effort between both institutions would highly benefit the cybersecurity community and find more effective ways of fighting against terrorism. Along these lines, citizens would be guaranteed a safer environment, reinforcing democratic institutions and values. It opens opportunities for economic growth and working out social problems. Moreover, this alliance would promote peace and harmony across European territory. Serbia firmly supports future relations and is willing to participate directly in this fight for amity and democracy.