

Joint special meeting of the Counter-

The main characteristics of the nexus between terrorism and organised crime in Europe are as follows:

Unlike in some other regions of the world, there currently appears to be no systematic cooperation between organised crime groups and terrorist groups. However, cooperation on a more *ad hoc* and opportunistic basis can be easily demonstrated (e.g. on the procurement of fire arms and explosives, as well as false documents).

In addition, some terrorist groups appear to be directly engaged in the trafficking of small arms, drug trafficking, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings – all for the purpose of financing of terrorism. In this way it can be claimed that there exists a certain level of overlap between organised crime groups operating primarily for their own profit and terrorist groups operating for the purpose of financing their other criminal activities and sustaining their organisations.

That said it should be kept in mind that the majority of terrorist attacks perpetrated or attempted in Europe in recent years have neither been very costly, nor always required the existence of an elaborate terrorist organisation in order to be carried out. But still, terrorists acting alone or in small groups have to in a number of cases relied on their personal links with organised crime groups to facilitate the procurement of weapons.

Another area of overlap concerns the recruitment of new members of criminal gangs and terrorist groups. In both cases European prisons regrettably present a fertile ground. In fact, many European members of terrorist groups have a significant criminal record.

What should be done?

First of all, there is a need for States to make better use of already existing international legal instruments on organised crime and on terrorism.

Secondly, coordination, information exchange and cooperation should be further improved, both at domestic and international levels. Moreover, it is important to avoid "compartmentalisation" by raising

awareness of the nexus between terrorism and organised crime among the various authorities responsible for the investigation and prosecution of terrorism and organised crime respectively.

Thirdly, States must make more use of special investigation techniques and, where necessary, consider setting up joint investigation teams.

Fourthly, the problem of radicalisation in prisons must be properly addressed.

Finally, making it very unattractive for organised crime groups to do businesses with terrorists may, in and by itself, be