Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 852 (1979)[1]

Terrorism in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling Recommendation 703 (1973), on international terrorism, and Resolution 648 (1977), on the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism ;

2. Concerned at the fact that terrorism represents a threat to which no European country can claim to be entirely immune ;

3. Condemning all terrorist acts, which regardless of their cause, consist of calculated violence against innocent people ;

4. Convinced that there is no justification for politically motivated violence in a democratic society where legal provision is made for change, improvement and development by means of political persuasion, and that, consequently, terrorism is an attack against the constitution and the democratic stability of the state ;

5. Accepting and emphasising that it is the responsibility of the state to remove the sociological conditions that may lie at the roots of certain forms of violence, and stressing the need for the member states of the Council of Europe, individually and collectively, to work out comprehensive policies aimed at safeguarding and strengthening their democratic structures ;

6. Convinced that resistance to terrorist blackmail should be a basic duty of democratic governments ;

7. Appreciating that, within member states, legislative and administrative measures have been taken, but more needs to be done to strengthen and co-ordinate police forces, to improve the gathering of intelligence, to ensure more thorough protection of persons and installations, especially nuclear installations, and to adapt criminal and procedural laws to this new form of crime ;

8. Stressing, however, that anti-terrorist strategies, if they are vital for the preservation of democratic institutions, must also be compatible with them, and must always be subject to national constitutions and the European Convention on Human Rights ;

9. Believing that a comprehensive counter-terrorist strategy at national level must also include popular awareness and popular mobilisation in support of democratic institutions and the isolation of terrorists ;

10. Considering that the media, when reporting on terrorist incidents, should accept the self-restraint required to balance the public's right to be informed with the duty to avoid giving help to the terrorists by publicising unduly their activities ;

11. Concerned at the international dimension of present-day terrorism, not only through operational or ideological links between terrorist groups active in different countries, but also through the involvement of certain states which aid or abet terrorists ;

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1. Assembly debate on 31 January 1979 (22nd Sitting) (see Doc. 4258, report of the Political Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 31 January 1979 (22nd Sitting).

12. Calling upon the Council of Europe member states and all other states to co-operate with one another in implementing the guiding principles of the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and increasing its effectiveness by mutual assistance in the fight against international terror ;

13. Mindful of the role of the Council of Europe in organising the response of its member states to national and international terrorism ;

14. Noting that the Committee of Ministers adopted a Declaration on Terrorism on 23 November 1978,

15. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

15.1. in the context of their exchanges of views on UN activities, co-ordinate the positions of member states on :

a. the draft international convention on hostage-taking ;

b. the advisability of promoting an international convention to sanction breaches of the 1963 Tokyo Convention, the 1970 Hague Convention and the 1971 Montreal Convention, on Air Piracy ; and

c. the advisability of promoting other conventions prosecuting specific terrorist activities ;

15.2. co-ordinate the positions of member states in respect of the implementation of all the clauses of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, and examine the advisability of negotiating appropriate amendments to it ;

15.3. invite the governments of member states which have not yet done so to join the agreement on sanctions against air piracy reached in Bonn on 17 July 1978 between the heads of state and government of the seven most industrialised Western nations ;

15.4. invite the governments of member states to use all their political and economic influence to dissuade those states which aid or abet terrorists from doing so ;

15.5. invite the governments of member states to use all their political and economic influence to dissuade those states which aid or abet terrorists from doing so ;

15.6. invite the governments of member states to take all the action necessary to prevent the presence on their territory of persons linked with terrorist groups, who are active on the territory of other member states ;

15.7. invite the governments of member states which have not yet done so to sign and ratify most urgently the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which should become fully operative over the widest possible area of European democratic states ;

15.8. take action to establish a juridical area common to all member states of the Council of Europe and prevent the territory of one member state from being used as a base for the preparation of terrorist activities in another member state ;

15.9. and invite the governments of member states to promote, in pursuit of police co-operation, the exchange of topical information on the daily situation, with special regard to transfrontier movements of members of terrorist circles, to harmonise the methods of search for objects like weapons, passports, etc., in order to enable their transfrontier application, and to establish secure telex lines between national police centres ;

15.10. invite the governments of member states to hold meetings periodically of Ministers of the Interior and other ministers responsible for public security, in order to exchange views and coordinate their national policies against terrorism.