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Welcome Delegates!

Hi, my name is Lily Ge and I'm so excited to serve as your Senior Head Chair this AMUN XIX! Along with Grace, I'd like to welcome all of you to the European Council (EC) where you will have the chance to engage in heated debate and honest, open discussion over some of Europe's most pressing issues. For a little bit about me, I'm currently a senior at Bergen County Academies, in the Medical Academy. I was lucky to get to take part in MUN from the very beginning of high school, my first conference being in freshmen year. In fact, I loved my very first AMUN experience... it's still one of the most memorable, rewarding, and (at times) challenging experiences I've had. But the hours of debate may only be a blur when compared to the brilliant, amazing people that I've met during the conference who, although they may have been my most avid opponents during committee, have turned out to be lifelong friends. I'm honored to serve as part of EC's dais, and will work to try and make sure your AMUN experience is just as special as mine was (and still is).

Most of all, I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and hearing your stances on these issues. We've definitely got some great debate (and surprises) in store for you all! If you have any questions about the topics, committee, the conference, Model UN in general, anything at all, definitely feel free to ask!

Lily Ge, European Council Chair
lilyge@bergen.org

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TOPIC A: COMBATting TERRORISM IN EUROPE

Introduction

The Council of the European Union, more often referred to as the European Council (EC), presides over the European Union's (EU) overall political direction and priorities. While this committee does not in and of itself write legislations for implementation, nor does it take charge of analyze existing EU laws, the EC is heavily involved with setting the EU's policy agenda, particularly by identifying issues of concern and discussing future actions to take as an organization.

The EC has had a relatively short history after being created just 44 years ago in 1974. And though it initially was set up as a place for informal discussion between the heads of state of existing EU member states, over time the EC has shifted to take a larger role in determining EU priorities. These particular duties were explicitly written out in the Treaty of Maastricht which stated the EC's formal duties: "to provide the impetus and general political guidelines for the EU." More recently, in 2009, the Lisbon Treaty fully established the EC to become one of the EU's seven official institutions.

At present, the EC consists of the heads of state and/or government of the current twenty-eight EU member states, as well as two separate figures: the European Council President and the President of the European Commission. These two individuals will not take part in any vote, as they are mainly advocating for the overall good of the Union. Furthermore, when making decisions, votes are either decided by unanimity or by qualified majority (again, barring the EC President and the President of the Euro. Comm.).

Topic History

Terrorism has long been a permanent, extensive part of the European Union's history. The EC officially states that [Terrorism] poses a threat to our security, to the values of our democratic societies and to the rights and freedoms of European citizens. More recently, between the years of 2009 and 2013, "1,010 attacks... were identified in the Member States... [leading] to the deaths of 38 people." According to the European Police Office data, collected by the Robert Schuman Foundation, "152 terrorist attacks occurred in five Member States, most being in France (63), Spain (33), and the UK (35)" in 2013.

Since 2011, the number of arrests made by local, state, national, and international officials on the grounds of "religiously motivated terrorism" have been on the rise. The EC has in the past, and continues, to highlight the "threat that has come from self-radicalised, self-organised, and self-financed individuals." This growing threat "sadly became a reality in 2015", culminating with the Paris attacks, happening on the 7th of January and 13th of November, Copenhagen, and Belgium.

Current Situation

As aforementioned, the threat of domestic and international terror has continued to the present day. Specifically, in 2016 alone, according to statistics provided by the European Union, a total of “142 failed, foiled, or completed attacks were carried in EU members states.” Furthermore, of the “142 victims that died in terrorist attacks, 135 people were killed in jihadist terrorist attacks. 1002 persons were arrested for terrorist offences in 2016, most of them were related to jihadist terrorism.”

The EC will address the various fronts by which terrorist groups and organizations take to infiltrate and target European citizens, having been confronted with the reality of “fighters leaving Europe to undertake a holy war (jihad) in various places, particularly in Syria.” Estimates by the Robert Schuman Foundation state that “between 3,500 and 5,000 Union citizens have left their country to become foreign fighters since the start of the war... in Syria, Iraq, and Libya [which] can pose a serious threat to security on their return to Europe.” The EC realizes that the EU is facing a “multifaceted terrorist threat that is making a direct challenge to [our] values.” The past attacks, failed and successful, have been an attacked “against all of us. We shall face this threat together with all the means necessary and unfailing resolve.”

Possible Solutions

As has been affirmed in the past, the EU must be committed to “jointly fighting terrorism and providing for the best possible protection for its citizens” combined with the cooperation of third countries and international institutions. In the past, the EU and the EC have worked together to create guidelines for combatting terrorism in Europe. But, as the times, technologies, and tactics of these terrorist groups, organizations, and individuals evolve, so too should the ways in which we take to eradicate the threats.

Preventionist strategies include innovating and coming up with new ways to “identify and tackle the factors which contribute to radicalisation and the processes by which individuals are recruited to commit acts of terror.” These strategies may entail tracking the movement of cash flow and capital, recruitment strategies, and jihadist propaganda. However, evolving methods have shed light on so-called the power and influence that “social media” can have for “mobilisation and communication”, as well as the nascency of “lone actors and foreign fighters.” Therefore, the EC looks to focus on prevention, but also the issue of change and evolution of counter-terror procedures.

Secondly, the EU has focused on protecting the citizens of Europe against any attack should any be attempted and carried out. This priority is to reduce the “vulnerability to attack [by] protection of external borders, the improvement of transport security, the protection of strategic targets and the reduction of the vulnerability of critical infrastructure.” It is important to note that as the EU borders between Member States are naturally fluid, to allow for the better of trade, immigration, and economic prosperity, so any plans taking Protection into account must also keep this in mind.

Finally, the EU stresses the importance of creating allied support from international partners that “integrates [the] internal and external aspects” of counter-terror. This has been especially important at present given that “working closely with other international and regional organisations to build international consensus and promote international standards” can bring each body closer to reaching an explicit agreement on the definition of terrorism. The EU, in the past, has worked with such groups like the UN, Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, Council of Europe, the OSCE, League of Arab States, and the Organisation for Islamic

Questions to Consider

1. What can be done to create an evolving plan that will keep up with the changing demands and threats from terrorist groups and organizations?
2. How will this plan be implemented in keeping with existing EU laws and policies (esp. free and open borders for Member States)?
3. What can be done to address root causes and the conditions that are especially conducive to the spread of terrorism?
4. What measures can/must be taken on the internet and through social media sites and technologies to target terrorist recruitment while, at the same time, keeping with the free speech policies of the EU and each Member State?
5. To what extent should Member Nations of the EU partner with countries not in the EU? Does this apply to countries such as the United States? The United Kingdom (“Brexit”)?
6. To what extent should Member Nations of the EU partner with companies on this issue? With non-governmental organisations? With other groups?

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TOPIC B: IMPLEMENTING THE PARIS ACCORD

Topic History

In December of 2015, representatives from 196 countries came together at the Paris Climate Conference to combat the growing issue of climate change, with the main objectives of “adopting green energy sources, cutting down on climate change emissions, and limiting the rise of global temperatures.” On December 12, the first “legally binding” global climate deal, known as The Paris Agreement, was adopted, leading the way for more action to be taken for the protection of the environment.

The main goal of the agreement was to keep the average temperature of the world “below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.” Currently, the global average temperature is about 1°C above pre-industrial levels, but, even with the agreement, it is still expected that the world will exceed the 2°C limit. In addition, the agreement had another non-binding goal that was even more ambitious: to try to limit the increase of global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This was added to appease many small island nations, for they argued that even a 2°C rise in temperatures would lead to higher sea levels that were dangerous to their countries. In order to meet these goals, before and during the Paris Convention countries submitted their National Climate Action Plans, which lay out each country’s plan to reach the target temperature and reduce their emissions.

Furthermore, in an effort to help developing countries, another clause was added to require the developed countries to provide \$100 billion a year to developing countries. The foreign aid will be used to help the developing countries to make the switch from fossil fuels to green energy sources. However, none of these reductions and requirements are expected to be done immediately after the agreement; instead, they do not begin to go into effect until 2020. The year 2020 will also be the deadline for countries to submit their long-term plans for reducing emissions. Every 5 years, the targets of each nation will be reevaluated to ensure that the targets reflect the full potential of each country in terms of its capability to fight climate change. By around 2050, there will be a “net zero emissions of greenhouse gases.” The Paris Agreement hopes that by then, the world will be able to remove the same amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere as the amount that is emitted. One example is planting more trees to absorb the carbon dioxide that is emitted.

Current Situation

As of today, 158 countries have ratified the Paris Agreement. All 196 countries at the convention in 2015 have until April 21, 2017 to sign the agreement, and many had done so much earlier. The Paris Agreement needed at least 55 nations to sign the deal before going into effect, and these 55 nations had

to represent at least 55% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions. On October 5, 2016, this requirement was met and the agreement came into effect.

However, on June 1, 2017, President Trump announced that the United States of America would be withdrawing from the Paris Agreement during a speech in the Rose Garden. The White House argued that the agreement would harm the American economy and sovereignty because it held the US to "unfair environmental standards," which were not imposed on many other countries that were large polluters. Under the agreement, the US had to pledge to reduce its emissions by 26% to 28% below 2005 levels by 2025, and it had to promise to commit \$3 billion to aid developing countries by 2020. In contrast, President Trump cited that China would not have to even begin reducing its emissions for another 13 years, and India would not have to make any effort in reducing emissions unless it received billions of dollars in foreign aid. President Trump emphasized that these "unfair environmental standards" would harm American businesses and workers, and would ultimately weaken the US economy. During his speech, President Trump did say that he does want to protect the environment, but he does not support the Paris Agreement and wants to negotiate a better climate deal for the US.

Immediately after President Trump's speech, leaders from France, Germany, and Italy released a statement, saying that the Paris accord was "irreversible and could not be renegotiated." The EU's commissioner for climate also stated on Twitter that the withdrawal of the US has weakened the Paris Agreement, and many Europeans have criticized the US for not taking on its role as a global leader, especially on this issue of climate change. With the US withdrawing from the deal, many resources it would have been able to contribute, particularly in terms of foreign aid, are now no longer available as well.

Possible Solutions

The EU has stated on numerous occasions that it is committed to combatting the rise of global temperatures. Thus, it is adamant in its support of the Paris Agreement and does not want to be deterred by President Trump's withdrawal from the climate deal.

Some possible solutions include striking a new climate deal in response to President Trump's call for a renegotiation. This would most likely lead to a less ambitious deal in order to keep the US on board. However, this is highly unlikely as many countries, especially from Europe, have already come out against this idea. Senior EU officials have stated that the international agreement should not be affected by a domestic election; thus, they say it cannot be renegotiated.

Another solution was offered by EU officials, which was to circumvent the White House and to directly deal with American states, cities, and major corporations. Many states, cities, and corporations have already pledged to follow the requirements of the Paris Agreement despite the President's announcements. California has led several states and dozens of cities to create the United States Climate Alliance, which currently includes California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Minnesota. The Alliance promises to meet the US's requirements in the deal. However, it will be

quite difficult for them to reduce the US's emissions by 26% to 28% below 2005 levels without the federal government's support.

A third option would be for the world to move on without the US. Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, stated that even though he believed the US's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement was "a big mistake," the "fight against climate change would continue with or without the US." The world's rising temperatures can be prevented through the efforts of other countries despite the US not being a part of the agreement. Other countries can still cooperate to reduce their emissions, promote research into better green energy technology, and adopt greener energy sources.

Bloc Positions

According to recent studies, Sweden, Germany, and France are the only countries in the EC that have implemented environmental policies that follow the promises they made at the Paris Convention. In contrast, Poland, the Czech Republic, Spain, and Italy have been weakening the overall reduction effort in greenhouse gases due to their support for "forestry and carbon accounting dodges." These loopholes allow such countries to reduce their costs, as reducing emissions is very costly and can be a burden on some countries.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the trade-offs of having a strong economy and fighting climate change?
2. What should members of the EU do in response to the withdrawal of the US from the Paris Agreement?
3. Should the Paris Agreement be renegotiated in an effort to get the US back on board? Or can their leadership and resources be sacrificed to keep the Paris Agreement as it is?
4. Does the Paris Agreement violate national sovereignty or impose unfair environmental standards on certain countries?
5. To what extent should the EU work with US states, cities, and corporations? Will such action negatively affect relations between the EU and the US, and, if so, is it worth it?
6. What else can be done to address the issue of rising global temperatures?

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