

TENTH SITTING

Wednesday, 7 December 2005

The sitting was opened at 15.00 with Mr Goris, President of the Assembly, in the Chair.

1. Attendance register

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The names of those substitutes present at this sitting which have been notified to the President will be published with the list of representatives appended to the minutes of proceedings.

2. Adoption of the minutes

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – In accordance with Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure, the minutes of the previous sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments on the minutes? ...

The minutes are adopted.

3. Election of the President of the Assembly for the 52nd Session

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The first item on the orders of the day is the election of the President of the Assembly for the 52nd session, that is from 1 January 2006.

In accordance with Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure, no representative may stand as a candidate for the office of President unless a proposal for his candidature has been sponsored in writing by three or more representatives, and representatives who are members of a national government may not be members of the Bureau.

Also, Rule 6.1 lays down that substitutes may not be elected to the Bureau of the Assembly.

I have received only one nomination, that of Mr Jean-Pierre Masseret.

This candidature has been correctly submitted in the form prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

Under Rule 9.4, if there is only one candidate, that candidate is declared elected.

Is there any objection? ...

Mr de PUIG (*Spain*) (summary) asked for the floor after the election of the President.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – It is duly noted.

I call Mr Walter.

Mr WALTER (*United Kingdom*) – Thank you, Mr President. I, too, fully support the nomination of Mr Jean-Pierre Masseret. On behalf of the Federated Group of Christian Democrats and European Democrats, I give my wholehearted support to his nomination as President.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I call Mr Hancock.

Mr HANCOCK (*United Kingdom*) – I, too, give to Jean-Pierre my warmest congratulations and those of my group and wish him all the very best for the coming term in the presidency.

I also take this opportunity to thank you, Mr President, on behalf of our group for your efforts on behalf of the Assembly under difficult circumstances. For a group to lose one President because of an election and another because of Government promotion and to have to find a third put us into the probably invidious position of having more former Presidents than any other group currently. Nevertheless, it was an inspirational choice on the part of the Liberals to put you in as President and I thank you on their behalf.

I have no hesitation in saying that I believe that Jean-Pierre will be a fine leader. He is a fine man and I, as leader of my group, have very much enjoyed working with him over the last 18 months in his capacity as leader of the Socialist Group. Since the time that I was a young socialist I have held the view that anyone who controlled a socialist group for any length of time could lead anything, a government or an assembly, and I am sure that the WEU will be no different. I wish Jean-Pierre all the very best. I am sure that we will be very appreciative of his leadership over the next three or four years.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you for your kind words, Mr Hancock.

I call Mr Schreiner.

Mr SCHREINER (*France*) (summary) thanked the President and announced the support of the entire French delegation for Mr Masseret.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – I call Mr Ates.

Mr ATES (*Turkey*) – First, I thank you, Mr President. You have done a great job in this very difficult period in Europe and we really appreciate your contributions. We will be working together from now on.

The candidature of Jean-Pierre Masseret has made us very happy. We know that he will do an excellent job and I congratulate him and wish him every success.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Mr Ates.

As no other member wishes to speak, I accordingly declare Mr Masseret President of the Assembly of Western European Union, the interim European Security and Defence Assembly, for the 52nd Session.

I congratulate Mr Masseret and invite him to address the Assembly.

4. Address by the President-elect of the Assembly

Mr MASSERET (*President-elect of the Assembly*) – Ladies and gentlemen, I shall speak French today. The next time, perhaps, I will speak in English for the benefit of my colleagues such as Mr Hancock. Today, however, as I said, I will speak in French please.

(The speaker continued in French) (Translation) First of all, may I say how moved I am. Even when one is the only candidate standing for an election in which there is little uncertainty about the results – which makes a change from what generally happens during national elections, when there can never be any certainty about the outcome – it is still very moving to have been appointed unanimously by one's colleagues and to hear their statements of support, encouragement and confidence.

I hope that I will prove worthy of the trust that you have shown in me. In any case, like all my colleagues who occupied this post before me, I will be the President of the Assembly as a whole, because in this institution we have always engaged in democratic debate in a spirit of mutual respect. We are the artisans of those universal values on which democracy is founded. I can assure you that as President of this Assembly I will continue to be guided by that same spirit.

Together we will, I am sure, continue to do some excellent work on the basis of our 50 years of experience, which is no mean achievement. Over those fifty years this institution has always been successful in framing opinions, producing reports of outstanding quality, conducting debates and organising colloquies in the service of peace and security.

Together we must shoulder and share a number of responsibilities, not least of all that of making the continent of Europe a leading player on the international stage. This emerged clearly from this morning's debates as it will, I am sure, from the debates later on today, in particular the one on the fight against terrorism.

Europe is a continent. Europe is an economic, cultural and scientific power. We wish to give this Europe of ours momentum, not in order to impose its power but solely to defend its vital interests, give it a voice in the concert of nations, assert our approach based on the universal values of democracy. In short, we want to work for progress in the economic, social and cultural spheres. For that to be possible, for

Europe to be able to play that important role in the community of nations, it must live in peace and security.

The Assembly's legitimacy requires no demonstration, because each and every one of us is a member of his or her national parliament, and as such we hold the sovereignty entrusted to us by our fellow citizens. This is the legitimacy which gives our institution its true dimension.

We must therefore look beyond the uncertainties of a Constitutional Treaty that remains in limbo. We are able to do this because we are always able to see beyond specific interests and to ensure that the general interest prevails.

I would like to remind those whom I might dub "political technocrats" that this Assembly is the most inclusive forum in which to define a European security and defence policy. We need a body at European level in which the national parliaments can freely express their views, in order to work towards a common objective: that of defending our continent's vital interests and making this Europe of ours, more than just a single market, a genuine political entity. It is in this area that we have things to say.

Together we need to tackle one of the main concerns of our citizens at the present time: that of creating more security, both within Europe and beyond its borders. We are the only place in which there is currently a clear definition of collective defence. The outstanding feature of this Assembly is its Article V. No-one can contest the authority conferred upon us by the modified Brussels Treaty.

We have to contend with new threats, in particular that of terrorism. Lluís Maria de Puig addresses this point in the report he will be presenting later on.

Our tasks are clear, in terms of the responsibilities placed on our shoulders. We must bring forward, adapt and adopt a more political project, because we want a Europe that counts in the international community. We have always made it our business to define and prepare the human and technical resources needed to defend Europe's vital interests.

Since this, then, is our main task, it would be political misconduct not to listen to the democratic message issued by our citizens. What they want is a more secure Europe, a Europe which is a factor for international stability. Our citizens are waiting and we are there to answer their call for democracy and for the democratic scrutiny of an essential policy through the involvement of each and every one of our national parliaments.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you once again for the trust you have shown in me. Rest assured that together we will carry on doing some excellent work in favour of peace and security in Europe.

The PRESIDENT (summary) congratulated Mr Masseret and wished him the best of luck for the future challenges. This was the last afternoon he himself would be in the chair. It was thanks to the cooperation of colleagues that so much has been accomplished, including visits, important debates and clear messages to European Governments about the future of European Security and Defence Policy.

He gave the floor to Mr de Puig.

Mr de PUIG (*Spain*) (summary) thanked the President on behalf of the Socialist Group and others in the Assembly.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Mr de Puig for your very kind words.

5. Election of Vice-Presidents for the 52nd session

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The next order of the day is the election of Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, to take office at the beginning of the next session.

Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure provides that proposals for candidatures for Vice-Presidents shall each be sponsored in writing by three or more representatives. Representatives who are members of a national government may not be members of the Bureau.

Also, Rule 6.1 lays down that substitutes may not be elected to the Bureau of the Assembly.

10 candidates have been properly sponsored.

In alphabetical order they are:

Ms Elvira Cortajarena Iturrioz (Spain), Mr Marcel Glesener (Luxembourg), Mr Jean-Pol Henry (Belgium), Mr Joachim Hörster (Germany), Mr Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom), Ms Elsa Papadimitriou (Greece), Mr Marc Reymann (France), Mr José Eduardo Vera Jardim (Portugal), Mr Bart van Winsen (Netherlands), Mr Marco Zacchera (Italy)

Under Rule 9(5), a single ballot shall be held on all candidates from delegations where no other member is standing. This applies to all the candidates. I propose that these nominations be approved by the Assembly by acclamation.

Is there any objection to the election of these Vice-Presidents by acclamation? ...

I take it that there is no objection.

I accordingly declare them elected Vice-Presidents.

The Vice-Presidents will take precedence by age, as follows:

Mr Marcel Glesener (Luxembourg), Mr Marc Reymann (France), Mr José Eduardo Vera Jardim (Portugal), Ms Elsa Papadimitriou (Greece), Mr Bart van Winsen (Netherlands), Mr Jean-Pol Henry (Belgium), Mr Joachim Hörster (Germany), Ms Elvira Cortajarena Iturrioz (Spain), Mr Tony Lloyd (United Kingdom), Mr Marco Zacchera (Italy)

6. Fighting international terrorism: a challenge for Europe

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – The next order of the day is the presentation of and debate on the report of the Political Committee on fighting international terrorism: a challenge for Europe, and vote on the draft recommendation (Document [1914](#)).

I call the Rapporteur, Mr de Puig, to present the report.

Mr de PUIG (*Spain*) (summary) said that international terrorism was a huge challenge for Europe and a major global threat which permeated politics. The report concentrated on Islamic terrorism and its relationship to defence policy. The report stemmed from the Assembly's thoughts on these matters and the lack of cooperation between European Governments in the fight against terrorism.

There was no agreed definition of terrorism and no parliamentary scrutiny of the sort that WEU believed should be in place.

The report did not seek to explain what terrorism was about. However, it was enough to state that terrorism was awful, implacable and cruel wherever in the world it took place. Current terrorist acts were without mercy and indiscriminate. Much of today's terrorism had the hand of al-Qa'ida behind it, but a significant level of unorganised terrorism emanated from copycat groups. This was a new facet of terrorism and even harder to fight.

Until recently, terrorists had predominantly come from Muslim countries, but now some were European citizens.

There were a number of non-exclusive theories on the roots of terrorism – for example, that Islam was incompatible with modernism, or incompatible with democracy. However, it was also important to realise that the Koran advocated a moderate, reasonable and democratic Islam as seen in, for example, Turkey. Furthermore, for centuries, there had been good cooperation with Islamic countries. Thus, such theories should be ruled out.

Many groups advocating terrorism felt that they had lost their identity. A further theory was based on the exploitation of Arab countries by Europe. A good example of this was the lack of a solution to the Palestinian question. This was very important for Arab countries.

European governments had, in the past, backed dictatorships in the Arab world. There was also a clash of cultures stemming from different religions.

The current terrorism phenomenon also presented specific threats which required a response at European level even though some European countries had not directly experienced terrorist attacks. A global stance was therefore necessary in the fight against terrorism.

It was very difficult to predict future attacks as terrorists were willing to die. Religion was the driving force behind this. A new facet of terrorism was the potential for terrorists to use weapons of mass destruction. This had not happened, although in the United States, there had been serious alarms. It remained a real possibility.

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks, initially there was a positive reaction in improving coordination between police forces and intelligence agencies, and in updating legislation. However, there were still shortcomings. Importantly, there had been no harmonisation of European legislation. The commitment made to the Council of Europe in 2004 was only for a system of voluntary cooperation. There was still no shared definition of terrorism or shared system of defence against terrorism. This was a priority as the current system was not working.

The EU was embroiled in a far reaching crisis which was hindering cooperation on anti-terrorism. The fight against terrorism required exceptional measures which might impinge on the freedoms of citizens. There had been debates in a number of countries over how security should or should not be allowed to encroach on human rights. No solution had yet been found. The EU, despite some requests, did not want to set up a pan-European intelligence agency.

Under the Schengen agreement, it was now much easier for terrorists to travel across borders than it was for the police. The real downside was that there was no parliamentary scrutiny of terrorism issues. However, having painted a bleak picture, he felt one had to consider what could be done. Within the EU and WEU a framework for terrorism could be put together, considering the goals required, and what parliamentary oversight would be needed. Parliamentary oversight did exist in some parliaments for police intervention but this did not work in all circumstances and it was impossible to differentiate between normal and special situations. These types of actions were legitimate only if subject to parliamentary scrutiny. Only the WEU Assembly had the scope to undertake this type of scrutiny at a European level, so the fight against terrorism was a reason for this Assembly to exist.

The draft recommendation offered ways of improving institutions and cooperation in order to fight terrorism. He was sure that his co-Rapporteur, Mr van Winsen, could add to these comments.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr de Puig.

I call the co-Rapporteur, Mr van Winsen.

Mr van WINSSEN (*Netherlands*) – Thank you. During the preparation of this report, I had the honour and opportunity last October to go to Moscow on behalf of WEU. On the initiative of the Russian State Duma and the Belgian Senate, 34 countries debated important aspects of the fight against terrorism, and some of the results of those deliberations can be found in our document.

The questions raised in that debate included how to harmonise national legislation and registration, how to fight corruption in finance and banking and how to find the best approach for parliamentary involvement in decision making on this very important issue. My colleague Mr de Puig has already referred to that latter point in his remarks.

In several countries, the feeling is that the fight against international terrorism is essentially a national matter that is confined within national boundaries – or, in the case of the Netherlands, its dunes and dykes. Fortunately, however, the awareness is spreading that this top-priority issue requires a common and coherent approach. It is for that reason that our report bears the subtitle “A challenge for Europe”, as that is what the fight against terrorism must be.

European countries share the same objectives. The first, of course, is to safeguard our peoples from terrorist attack. Next, we must defend the respect for, and protection of, human rights: that is an integral part of our democratic system. However, we must undertake more preventive action to facilitate the integration of Muslims living in European countries, and to improve further the intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

The European Security Strategy – the so-called Solana Strategy – of 2002 proposes a global approach to the fight against terrorism, but I do not believe that we use to the full all the instruments that are available. Until now, there has been no provision – and sometimes, I am afraid, the political will has not been 1000% – to use ESDP as the most important instrument in defence and, especially, security.

The fight against terrorism must be one of ESDP's highest priorities, as important as the battlegroups and the Agency. We believe that it must have a more important place on the agenda of ministers of defence, who must decide on a common and concrete action plan. That was already foreseen before summer 2005, and our report repeats the recommendation that a European counter-terrorism intelligence agency centre must be established.

To combat terrorism, we must cooperate with NATO. As we say in the report, we must improve and intensify cooperation between NATO and WEU, despite the differences in structures, competences and capacity. That recommendation places on us the responsibility but also the task to exert more influence in those contexts. In finding solutions, it is important to utilise the instruments that are available through NATO and EU operations to combat terrorism.

With respect to national sovereignty, we must find more ways to harmonise legislation and regulation, as my colleague Mr de Puig has already said. For some countries, that may be a difficult process because it concerns to a lesser or greater extent national sovereignty. But sometimes we must choose whether to give up a little of our sovereignty in terms of legislation and regulation in order to operate directly and constructively to fight terrorism. That will be a difficult process, but a necessary one.

Secondly, it is necessary to protect our borders. Therefore, the report and the recommendations emphasise the European Neighbourhood Policy and the need to reserve competence in order to fight threats to our security such as organised crime, trafficking and terrorism, which are often related. Therefore, we must not only adopt the ENP operations and action plans, but improve cross-border cooperation in several areas. That means establishing connections with our eastern neighbours, including the Russian Federation, and our neighbours in the south. In that way, we can give more stimulus to the process.

I hope that the report will encourage further debate on this important subject without too much delay because we cannot wait too long for a coherent policy and a common strategy to combat terrorism.

I thank my colleagues Mr de Puig and Floris de Gou for our fruitful and friendly cooperation. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Mr van Winsen.

The debate is open.

I call Ms Bilgehan.

Ms BILGEHAN (*Turkey*) (summary) congratulated the Rapporteurs on their report and noted that terrorism was a threat with many dimensions. As an MP in a country that had suffered from terrorism over many years, she felt able to speak in this debate. As a woman and mother she felt even more sensitive about this issue. Terrorism made use of religion and identity to achieve particular aims. It was necessary to agree that terrorism was an illegitimate means to an end.

International cooperation was essential. There should be no discussion of good and bad terrorists. One man's bad terrorist should not be the next man's good terrorist.

In Turkey, the reform process in the work towards EU accession had brought forward further work on human rights and freedoms. The issue of whether some freedom must be restricted to deal with terrorism was raised and it was noted that this question had been raised more frequently since 11 September 2001. It was hard to find an answer when terrorism was considered in these terms. It was easier if the question of security were looked at instead.

If differences were about diversity and were not divisive, these issues could be removed from the debate and then ways to remove the other reasons for terrorism could be examined. Another concept, solidarity, was considered. Terrorism could be described as a "scourge of our age" as all the population was threatened, and this provided a case for solidarity. An inclusive, not exclusive, approach was required

at all levels. What was under threat was the freedom to live in a democratic society. She felt that, given the choices available, humanity would be chosen over death.

The PRESIDENT – I call Mr Cebeci.

Mr CEBECI (*Turkey*) – Mr President, esteemed colleagues, I congratulate the Rapporteurs, Mr de Puig and Mr van Winsen on an excellent report on fighting international terrorism. It is rightly named, as the title of the report suggests, as a real “challenge for Europe” but not, I believe, for Europe alone. It is a challenge for all the citizens of the world and for all humanity. I want to express immediately the fact that I fully support the recommendations in the report.

As my colleague, Ms Bilgehan, stated, we are familiar with terrorism in Turkey. We were not introduced to it on 11 September 2001, as we have known the phenomenon of terrorism for almost a quarter of a century. The Turkish Government has fought with a separatist terrorist movement for almost 20 years. Now almost all of Turkey’s citizens view terrorism as a common threat to humanity, human dignity, democracy, human rights and also to economic and social development. As such, there can be no excuse for terrorism.

I fully agree that international cooperation is essential in combating terrorism. That must be in conformity with international law. The root causes and remedies need to be addressed, while not compromising the fight against terror.

One important aspect of this issue is that no distinction should be made between terrorist organisations. There is no room for double standards in this fight. We must reject terrorism as a method, regardless of where, why and how it is employed. Combating terrorism should be global and collective. Yes, the United Nations should continue to play a prominent role, whereas both NATO and the EU must continue their efforts in trying to find a coherent and coordinated response to terrorism.

We all know that terrorist movements have a political agenda. To achieve their political agendas, and their political objectives, they sometimes use ethnicity, sometimes religion and sometimes ideology – whichever is better priced in the market.

I regret the fact that in the report there are several attempts to identify the terrorism that everyone knows has political agendas with a belief system or religion to which more than a billion people subscribe. It is regrettable when there are other choices for naming terrorism, such as al-Qa’ida terrorism, that the report repeatedly refers to Islamic terrorism.

I would like to cite two sentences from the report, even though I know that these are not the opinions of the respected Rapporteurs. These are the opinions of just a few marginal people, but I would like to point out the trap into which they fall. Paragraph 20 of the report states: “One line of reasoning is that Islam is incompatible with modernity”. Paragraph 21 states: “Others claim that the Koran itself calls for violence against non-believers.” Esteemed colleagues, those are exactly the opinions of the terrorists. That is the trap that has been fallen into: they want everybody to believe that terrorism stems from religion. The marginals or extremists on both sides advocate those opinions and I very much regret that those opinions have a place in this report.

There are immediate things that we should be doing to combat terrorism: they are short term in nature. They include sharing intelligence, better border controls and better coordination. In the longer term, some other creative measures should be taken. I would like to point as an example to one project that was initiated by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, last year. The programme, is called the “Alliance of Civilisations”, is co-chaired by the premiers of both Turkey and Spain, and will serve as a bridge between different cultures and religions. It should help to overcome prejudice, misinterpretations, misconceptions and polarisation.

Before I conclude, I would like to mention the fact that the fight against terrorism is not only a police or military issue but a communications issue. Unfortunately for the fight against terrorism, a television station that used to broadcast in England was closed down and reopened in Denmark. It is known and it is proven that it is exactly the same television station. Unfortunately, some of our allies are applying this double standard. We encourage all our allies in Europe to reopen investigations into this terrorist organisation and its media outlets.

Today, Turkey continues to fight terrorism with all its institutions. We also have to be careful about the sources of financing and organisational support, which has bearing on the propaganda operations of terrorist organisations within our country. We believe that a firm international stance against terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, would have a serious demoralising effect on the terrorist organisations, once we act and coordinate our efforts. Once again, I congratulate the Rapporteurs.

The PRESIDENT – The next speaker is Mr Mota Amaral.

Mr MOTA AMARAL (*Portugal*) (summary) noted that the report cautiously addressed delicate issues. Terrorism was hard to define. The Council of Europe had proposed the definition of “violence against civilian populations” but there had been considerable reluctance to adopt this, so there was now no common definition. Some countries were not concerned by violence outside their frontiers, although they were when it took place at home. A common approach was needed.

To some extent, this was a police not a defence issue, and close police cooperation was necessary. There should be no illusions, however, as to the practical extent of cross-border police cooperation. The activities of foreign police in any country could lead to unfortunate incidents, as recent allegations demonstrated. This did not help mobilise public opinion. But there was a shared purpose and a common agenda to end fundamentalist terrorism, which was not necessarily religious. It was blasphemy to impose a vision on others by taking life. The activities of fanatics, some of whom were mentally disturbed, who exploited others for their own purposes, were not related to religion.

The proposals in the report should be supported. It was to be hoped that competent national authorities would gather information, influence public opinion and mobilise their publics in the fight against terrorism.

The PRESIDENT – I call Mr Coskunoglu.

Mr COSKUNOGLU (*Turkey*) – This is an important and timely report on something that is very sad but a fact of life: terrorism. I thank Mr Mota Amaral for recognising the sensitivities that exist in Turkey on this issue.

I want to emphasise some points of particular importance in the report. On page 2, Recital (*ii*) refers to “strongly condemning all forms of terrorism” – I underline that – “irrespective of its alleged causes or objectives”. Everyone seems to agree with that in general, but when it comes to specifics, there is sometimes no such consensus.

I believe that that is because of the difficulty of defining the term “terrorism” or “terrorist”. The words “terrorism” and “resistance” can be confused. We should be very clear and sensitive about that. Obviously, I understand that human rights are a sensitive issue and one that does not easily allow us to call certain groups of people terrorists, but when we see certain groups doing terrorist activities year after year, we should not be as timid as we sometimes are in labelling them terrorists.

Only today, I read in the *International Herald Tribune* an account of the unfortunate events in Madrid. The very first sentence reads “The militant Basque separatist group ETA set off five small bombs in Madrid”. ETA is not just a militant Basque separatist group, it is obviously also a terrorist group too. The same is true of the PKK.

The same newspaper report says that “ETA has killed more than 800 people (...) in its nearly 50-year effort to establish an independent Basque state”. The PKK has caused more than 30 000 killings in only 10 years. There should be no doubt or hesitation about calling the PKK a terrorist organisation.

Recently, in the Council of Europe we elected a Human Rights Commissioner. When we in the Socialist group were questioning the candidate, in reply to my question, he openly and unambiguously stated that the PKK was a terrorist group in his country and in other places. I want to establish that because the difficulty of defining “terrorism” causes some of the weaknesses in anti-terrorist law.

I also highlight recital (*iv*), which reads, “Convinced that the only reaction to this threat can be to contest, fight and defeat it” – namely terrorism. I stress that the word “fighting” here does not mean literally fighting with weapons but other forms of fighting, to which the report refers. I am not going to read them all out, but they are covered in paragraph 28. Moreover, paragraph 86 also makes it clear that

“fighting” is not only a question of weaponry. It states: “We reiterate our call upon States to refrain from organising, financing, encouraging” – I underline that word – “providing training for or otherwise supporting terrorist activities and to take appropriate measures to ensure that their territories are not used for such activities.”

That is indeed a relevant and pertinent statement. Fighting does not necessarily mean fighting with the security forces or the police, but the point is particularly important given the way in which terrorists are encouraged and recruited. The report recognises an important recent aspect of terrorism when it states in paragraph 17 that “The terrorist threat now comes from within member states of the Union and other European countries, since terrorists are also being recruited from among the citizens of our own countries, and no longer necessarily come from outside.” That is what has been happening, and let me ask why. How are they recruited? They are recruited not necessarily for the alleged cause of the terrorist organisation, and we should recognise that fact, which is not stated in the report.

Paragraph 80 reads: “The European Commission emphasises that acting in partnership to fight security threats such as organised crime, trafficking and terrorism and to revitalise the process of government and the development of democracy, human rights and the rule of law will help bring the Mediterranean Partners closer to the EU.” It is not just the Mediterranean partners; it is important for all countries, because drug trafficking is one way of recruiting terrorists in many countries.

I shall now make some comments on the EU’s policy and strategy on anti-terrorism. I can see three shortcomings. First, many of the relevant powers for domestic and foreign policy remain in the hands of the member states, which often diverge deeply. Terrorists do not diverge: they are always well focused.

Secondly, in recent years in particular, EU counter-terrorism agencies seem to have proliferated. That inevitably results in the side-effects of bureaucratic confusion and turf warfare.

Thirdly, EU-NATO relations are problematic because the United States takes a certain approach to terrorism. In paragraph 49, the report rightly states that the United States approach is not very acceptable in Europe. That is certainly the case. However, once we involve NATO, we inevitably involve the United States, and some cross-Atlantic agreement should be reached. Furthermore, NATO and the EU are in a state of flux, which results in some shortcomings in the EU’s role in fighting terrorism.

Finally, I should like to talk about Turkey’s important role in world counter-terrorism. It is a member of NATO and of the Council of Europe. Terrorism against a particular country does not necessarily occur within that country, as in the example stated in paragraph 14 of the report, in which al Qa’ida attacked the British Consulate in Turkey and the HSBC bank. Turkey has suffered a lot from PPK terrorists. The report should mention that explicitly, and it should mention another important international body that can play a role, namely the Council of Europe. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe will play an important role as an international body beyond the European Union

I welcome the report, and I congratulate the Rapporteurs on doing such an excellent job.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Coskunoglu.

The next speaker is Mr Hancock, Vice-Chairman of the Political Committee.

Mr HANCOCK (*United Kingdom*) – I congratulate both Rapporteurs. I have worked with both of them for a long time and have great respect for them. The report is excellent, although I share the sentiments of our Turkish colleague, who made a good point about the flaw in it. It actually gives credence to terrorists by adding something to the name “terrorist”. The minute we put a religious slant or try to add something to “criminal” or “terrorist”, we give those things a legitimacy that terrorists themselves crave. Mr de Puig’s discussion in much of his speech of the whys and wherefores of supposed Islamic terrorism gave credit where credit is not due. It is important that that point is repeated time and again.

On the day when New York was attacked, I remember being at a WEU meeting in Brussels. We were drip-fed information as it occurred, and I recall having the whole hideousness of the event unveiled on the drive home to London. My mind went back to 20 years earlier when I was often in the north of Ireland. America then stood by, allowing terrorists to be funded regularly by organisations within the United States. America did nothing about that, yet the same politicians were wheeled out on that day to

talk about how awful it was that America's citizens should have been attacked by terrorists. They had ignored, time and again, pleas from United Kingdom Governments of all parties and from politicians in Northern Ireland asking them to do something about the way in which they allowed organisations in their own country to fund terrorists.

I listened with great interest to the issues discussed after that dreadful day of attacks in the United States. We had the Bush explanation, did we not? Those who were not with us were against us, irrespective of where they came from or what they stood for. Today, we are talking about the difficulties that we have in finding a proper definition for "terrorism". Why can there not be a consensus that these hideous, criminal, evil acts are just that, and that the terrorists who perpetrate them are just evil, despicable criminals who should be readily identified? We should not flatter them by giving them other titles.

I remember 20 years ago talking to a young man in Northern Ireland who had survived a terrorist attack. He was one of 12 workmen who were having lunch in a cabin on a building site when they were attacked by terrorists. Four armed terrorists broke in and asked each man in turn where he lived and where he had gone to school.

As a result, nine were killed and three told to go home. That is an example of religion being given as an excuse for letting somebody live. I spoke to one of the three survivors, who happened to be a Roman Catholic. The nine Protestant workers were all shot dead in that work hut. The man I spoke to said that he would never go to church again in his life and that he would have not have anything to do with any organisation bearing a religious title. He was only alive because he had gone to the right school, as schools in Northern Ireland in that period of religious sectarianism were always identified by their religion.

I do not think that the report should give any credibility to organisations willing to kill women and children. I do not want to be lectured to by the president of a country that has armed, trained, equipped and financed terrorists to overthrow other countries and which has in its own way killed innocent women and children. I do not want to be told that the President of the United States is a knight in silver armour riding on a white horse and the guardian of all that is good in the world. The track record of America in this respect is manifest for us all to see, and it is clear that it has got things hopelessly wrong. Some of what is happening now in the world is a direct result of America's actions.

I am also concerned about the fact that young soldiers in the British military fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan are being attacked with weapons manufactured in European countries. When those weapons are retrieved by our troops, it is obvious that a lot of them are brand new. Many of the armaments used to blow up our troops come from European countries, but when those countries are challenged about the manufacture, transportation and delivery of those weapons, they deny all knowledge and say that they do not know how such a thing could have happened. Once again, that is unforgivable.

If there is to be a collective fight against terrorism, all countries must face up to their internal responsibilities. Whether they are getting hit by terrorism or not does not matter, as the fact is that their citizens are able to aid terrorism. How they can do that, whether it be for financial gain or some other reason, is beyond me, but it is unacceptable in any civilised society. That must be spelled out to all those nations that aspire to join the EU – and to some that already belong to it. All the nations to which I refer must have some knowledge of what is going on.

Some members have said that they do not know what motivates terrorism, but I believe that for some the terrorist act and the terrorist lifestyle are ends in themselves. In many countries, terrorism represents a sort of job for young people who are otherwise excluded from society, and it allows them to have the kudos that they are not able to get in any other way. That was certainly the case in Ireland. To those who have spoken about the events in Spain and Turkey, I say that more than 3 000 people have been killed by terrorism in the United Kingdom over the past 30 years. Moreover, tens of thousands of people have had their lives, homes, careers and jobs ruined by terrorism. Terrorism has cost the British taxpayer billions of pounds, and it is a price that we will continue to pay.

We have had to give an awful lot for peace in Ireland. As recently as two weeks ago, members of our parliament – myself included – were asked to approve legislation that would mean that killers of innocent women and children would not even have to face trial but could be given what, for want of a

better phrase, I would call a ticket to ride. They would not be required to face criminal prosecution, but would be able to return home.

What sort of closure does that give to the family of a young child who has been killed, or to the children of a young man cut down in his prime by wilful terrorism? However, it is a price that the British Government has suggested is worth paying if the result is peace. I am sure that personal closure would not be possible for the families concerned.

I was horrified that the terrorists who killed 10 British soldiers were allowed to go free after two years. My closest friend was shot dead on the streets of Londonderry 30 years ago, and the bullet and the gun used were financed in North America. I am horrified at the thought that the person who killed my best friend is allowed to live and breathe freely in the United Kingdom, but that is the price that we are asked to pay to achieve peace in our land.

A line has to be drawn between what societies are prepared to accept and what they are not, but people will only accept such a line if they believe and trust the people who are drawing it. I think that the intelligence network across the world has been thoroughly discredited by what has happened in the Balkans and Iraq. Suddenly, after the attacks on New York, the Americans suggested that they knew all that there was to know about al-Qa'ida and Osama bin Laden, but that was pushing things to the extreme. They suggested that they knew that something was coming but were unable to prevent it. Iraq is the most photographed place on earth, but the reason for going to war was never found.

I do not know whether the world is a safer place than it was before we attacked Iraq and went into Afghanistan, but it does not feel safe – not to me and not to the people whom I represent. They do not like to see their human rights infringed any more than anyone else does, but the Rapporteur was right to say that there is a balance to be struck between protecting our human rights and values and the willingness of a society to give a little to combat terrorism. Unfortunately, I believe that the approach of our governments to this issue – and of the EU, NATO and the United Nations – are so flawed that public confidence is at rock bottom across the world.

Yesterday, I was one of the members of the Political Committee who sat through a lecture given by a colleague from Zambia. He is a member of the South African defence college and he described the problems that people in Africa face. Several times he spoke about the role of Zimbabwe, and he was rightly challenged about that country's human rights record.

That sort of contradiction appears time and again in reports such as this and in lectures such as the one I have described. It also appears in many articles in the media, so is it any wonder that the people of our countries are so sceptical about politicians' ability to cope with the problem?

I wish the report well, but I have reservations about how it encourages excited terrorists to believe that their struggle is recognised and that it is religious rather than criminal. The report says that time and time again. That cannot be right and it should not happen.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Hancock.

I call Mr Clerides from Cyprus.

Mr CLERIDES (*Cyprus*) – Thank you. Obviously, no one is in favour of terrorism, which involves random acts of despicable violence against individuals, but we must be careful. Sometimes I get the feeling that the bitterness that reckless and wanton terrorist acts arouse makes us want to take revenge, but it would be a bad day if we were not able to act within the culture espoused for so many years by the EU, the Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights.

I remind the Assembly that our instruments in respect of human rights were not devised according to the caprice of some intellectuals. They came about after the savage second world war and were intended to avoid what preceded that war in the 1930s and during the war in the 1940s. We must strike the right balance between the steps that we take to combat terrorism and the need to protect our shared values, our human rights.

A couple of days ago in one of the international papers I read an interesting article emphasising the need to protect the nucleus of human rights in the fight against terrorism. There is a great risk that rights to

freedom of speech, to privacy and to the prevention of unlawful arrests and detentions and the right not to be tortured may be violated, and it is easy if one is not careful to go down the wrong path by acting in a revengeful manner. In combating terrorism, states have no right to behave in the same way as terrorists. As organised democratic states, we have no right to burn down villages, to torture or to detain for months or years without the right to trial. That is the first point that I wish to emphasise to put the debate in its rightful context.

My second point is that we appear to be moving towards a situation in which not only countries outside Europe breed terrorism, but in which some terrorism is being developed within Europe. That brings into question many issues, including social and economic policies and different models of immigration – whether we accept the British model of multiculturalism, the French model of integration or the American model. I read an interesting article on the American model. The Americans seem to accuse Europe's social model of being responsible for allowing unemployed immigrants to benefit from social welfare services, encouraging them to develop into the terrorists of the future. That is a new approach. The EU has the responsibility to speak with one voice. The French, the British, the Germans – everybody must speak with a united voice if we are to tackle successfully the problem of terrorism.

We must also improve the dialogue with the United States. We are worlds apart in the methodology and causes of terrorism and the way of handling the *modus vivendi* in general. We have seen that recently with the report that CIA planes were using European countries to transport terrorists for investigation or that it used some prison facilities in certain European countries. We have seen the excesses of United States unilateralism. I too am not sure whether we are living in a safer world today than we were before Afghanistan and Iraq. We must talk to the Americans and try to convince them, but if they insist in pursuing the policies that they have tried and that have perhaps failed, Europeans may have to take a different lead in sorting out the problem.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Clerides.

The final speaker in the debate is Mr Henderson. This will be his maiden speech. He is a former United Kingdom Government Minister so it is only his maiden speech in this Assembly. Therefore, last but not least, Mr Henderson, you have the floor.

Mr HENDERSON (*United Kingdom*) – Thank you, Mr President. I also thank the Rapporteurs for producing such an interesting report on an important issue that affects all our countries. You said, Mr President, that it was my maiden speech in WEU. One of the great differences between the British Parliament and every other forum in which I have spoken is that in the British Parliament one almost never speaks without interruption, whereas in most international forums one has a reasonably good chance of setting out one's stall.

In his introduction, Mr de Puig made some important points about the need for parliamentary scrutiny. In the United Kingdom, we have had a lot of scrutiny of government and other actions to counter terrorism. Indeed, on some occasions, I have not supported my own government on some of the proposals. I am sure that other countries that have experienced terrorist atrocities are also preoccupied with taking firm action to counter terrorism.

Mr de Puig also said that the problem that we have internationally is that to have parliamentary scrutiny there has to be a framework to scrutinise, and, first, that framework is not clearly defined and, secondly, where the framework has elements of cooperation, it is often intermittent and rarely is it considered to be permanent. That gives us great trouble in taking action to counter terrorism, which is a great advantage to the terrorist. The terrorist organisations with which I am familiar are very able to combat internationally any obstacles they face in reaching their goal, despicable as it is.

There are problems that have to be recognised in the EU. Reference has been made to the importance of tightening borders and I agree that more should be done in that regard. But I could not honestly say that that will do a great deal to counter terrorism. Apparently the four who committed the atrocities in the United Kingdom on 7 July this year were British citizens. If anyone has a responsibility to take action to counter that atrocity, it is Britain. But although they were British citizens, part of their organisation was an international organisation, so there is a role for international bodies to try to counteract the activities that are taking place.

Again with regard to the EU there is the issue of policing. We all know as parliamentarians in our own nations that it is extremely difficult to justify the involvement of police from other countries in our own countries in almost any circumstance. If it were thought that they were operating without very close cooperation with our own police, it would be almost impossible to get any kind of political support. That is a real problem that the EU faces and has faced for some time in dealing with this. EUROPOL has some advantages and progress has been made, but I do not really think that it has done an awful lot to counter terrorism and I think that the report recognises that.

The most important role for NATO is in counter-intelligence.

The problem that we have with counter-intelligence is that none of our intelligence agencies trust each other. We might imagine that there would be a close bond between some intelligence agencies, yet a great deal of information is not shared. If it cannot be shared with very close neighbours – I shall not mention any names – how can we possibly share it in a larger international forum? Although common issues bind us together, those issues are not shared 100% in common. Intelligence agencies are very suspicious of passing on intelligence relating to certain issues, probably because they believe that it will be abused by other recipients. That is a very considerable difficulty that NATO faces in making a contribution to countering terrorism.

The document talks about the possibilities of establishing an international counter-terrorist agency. I believe that that is worth looking into, but every nation state would want to know the small print before committing itself. One point that the document does not make is that there needs to be a reallocation of resources. If we are serious about countering terrorism, the resources that we spend on law and order and on defence matters should be transferred to counter-terrorist intelligence. Again, that is difficult for us to achieve in our respective countries. The British intelligence services now receive more resources than they did five years ago.

I opposed the invasion of Iraq. Even if there were a case for invasion, I believe action should have been taken through the United Nations, but that is another matter. One of my major reservations was that a country should not have been invaded unless there was top-class intelligence relating to what would have to be faced and what would have to be done afterwards. I have to say that I do not believe that the British Government had such intelligence or information when it took the decision, together with the Americans and others, to invade and eventually to occupy Iraq.

The basic point is that, to equip ourselves worldwide on all the various fronts for countering terrorism, there is a need to spend more money. We must accept that that is the case and I think that the document could say rather more on that aspect of the problem. I know that we can only exhort nation states, but we should do so and come together.

It was once said in the United Kingdom by a famous politician who is about to retire in the next year or two – it was said when he was in opposition – that one had to fight both crime and the causes of crime. We have to fight terrorism. I believe that NATO can play a more active role in fighting terrorism, but I believe that Europe's principal role should be to fight the causes of terrorism.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Henderson. I congratulate you on your maiden speech to this Assembly.

The debate is closed.

I call the Rapporteur, Mr de Puig.

Mr de PUIG (*Spain*) (summary) thanked all the speakers for the comments that were very useful. He wanted to look at the misunderstandings raised in the debate. It had been said that the report suggested that some terrorists were not criminals. This was not the case and the report did not give justification to terrorism. This report looked specifically at one type of terrorism, Islamic terrorism, which is why it had not considered groups such as ETA. He knew there were other types of terrorist groups that were not based on religion but the report did not look at them. He noted the comments of Ms Bilgehan. There were not good and bad terrorists but only bad terrorists. Some had said that the report lacked a definition of what a terrorist was, and this was bound to be true but personally when he saw an individual carry out an attack he thought that person was a terrorist even if the political aims were right.

Solidarity was also mentioned. This was considered to be important but there also had to be European political commitment and this was something more, as a member from the United Kingdom had indicated. Financial support was also important.

It was not just defence policy that was important. The terrorism issue involved politics as a whole in finding ways to prosecute terrorists and tackle their financial resources. This report looked at defence resources, not terrorism as a whole.

The protection of human rights and freedoms was mentioned. The fight against terrorism should not be an attack on the public.

Finally, considering parliamentary scrutiny, governments were confronted with a challenge where exceptional measures had to be grounded in law. It was for parliaments, be they national or international, to consider this. WEU could give its support to governments if they had taken exceptional measures. WEU could provide support to governments in their fight against terrorism.

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – Thank you, Mr de Puig.

I call the co-Rapporteur Mr van Winsen.

Mr van WINSEN (*Netherlands*) – I thank colleagues for their support and their many interesting remarks. Some spoke of the balance between our values and our battle against terrorism. Certainly, human rights are the keystone of our common shared values. However, many have asked whether we can restrict the freedom of our people.

In our appendix, we included an extract from the Final Document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn in order to underline the importance of everyone's rights and the difficulties in respect of that balance in fighting terrorism.

Some of our colleagues talked about the definition of "terrorist" or "terrorism" but that was not our task. However, that is an important point for further debate. None the less, we cannot give a solution to the problem of definition because of the geographical and cultural differences involved. A terrorist to one person has other features for other people. I am glad that the problem was mentioned.

I am also grateful for the examples that Mr Hancock gave and for the comments about the need for cross-border cooperation in fighting not only terrorism but trafficking and criminality, which can themselves be involved in the development of terrorism.

Mr Henderson said that it was difficult or even impossible to achieve full police cooperation in a European context. I hesitate to say that. There is the example of the European police mission in the Balkans, although its first aim was not to combat terrorism. It would cost time and money and require some decisions, but such police cooperation is a possibility.

There are instruments other than military ones. As some colleagues said, economic and social measures are needed to prevent terrorism.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr van Winsen.

The debate is closed.

I call Mr Hancock, on behalf of the Political Committee.

Mr HANCOCK (*United Kingdom*) – The Committee welcomes the report and was pleasantly surprised by the outcome. It was a protracted process, but both Rapporteurs were much congratulated by the committee. We commend it to the Assembly.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr Hancock.

The Political Committee has presented in Document [1914](#) a draft recommendation, to which no amendments have been tabled.

We will now proceed to vote on the draft recommendation contained in Document 1914.

Under Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure, if five or more representatives or substitutes present in the Chamber so desire, the Assembly shall vote by roll-call on a draft recommendation.

Does any member wish to propose a vote by roll-call? ...

That is not the case. We shall vote by show of hands.

(A vote was taken by show of hands)

The draft recommendation is adopted unanimously.

7. Closure of the 51st session

The PRESIDENT (Translation) – That concludes our business for this afternoon.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have now reached the end of the second part of the 51st session of the Assembly.

I thank all those who have participated in our work and pay particular tribute to the considerable efforts of the Rapporteurs. Particular thanks are also due to Mr Jacomet, a regular attender on behalf of our Secretary-General, and also to Ms Elif Ülgen, a stalwart on the Council bench, who is with us as always. I am most grateful to them for their support.

The first part of the 52nd session will be held between Monday 19 June and Wednesday 21 June 2006.

I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I therefore declare the second part of the 51st session closed.

(The sitting was closed at 17.10)