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Mr. Donald Tusk
President of the European Council

Brussels, 26 June 2018

Dear President Tusk,

We are writing with regard to the forthcoming European Council meeting of 28 – 29 June. I am pleased to note from the Council press release of 7 May that EU leaders are expected to ‘...*address progress made on resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks and capabilities to address hybrid threats, as well as on strengthening civilian CSDP, on military mobility and on the European Defence Fund.*’

This discussion is most timely. The European Parliament Special Committee on Terrorism (TERR) is very concerned by the increasing risk of non-state actors such as Daesh being in a position to deploy CBRN weapons with potentially catastrophic costs in terms of human life. Recently, TERR organised a workshop on ‘Terrorism and the CBRN threat’ and received presentations and research papers from experts on Member States’ medical preparedness, the detection and prevention of movement of CBRN material and on EU civil protection. The workshop confirmed the serious and increasing nature of the threat we face and the urgent need for the EU and Member States to invest more time, effort and resources in prevention, preparedness and response.

In terms of medical preparedness, the EU institutions have adopted a number of valuable policy and legislative acts to require and encourage the Member State action urgently required to ensure the adequate protection of EU citizens and first-responders in the case of a CBRN terrorist attack.

Article 24 (5) of Directive 2017/541 on Combatting Terrorism requires Member States to ‘*ensure that adequate medical treatment is provided to victims of terrorism immediately after a terrorist attack and for as long as necessary.*’

On 18th October 2017, the Commission published the EU CBRN Action Plan (COM(2017)610) with the stated intention of helping Member States meet their obligations to assist victims when it comes to an attack conducted with the CBRN materials. For instance, the Action Plan provides an opportunity for Member States to strengthen their preparedness capacity against the evolving threats through voluntary participation in a series of initiatives including joint procurement of medical countermeasures.



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On 1th December 2017, Council adopted conclusions supporting the EU CBRN Action Plan and:

- Recognizing that, while CBRN attacks are considered as low probability, such incidents could, however, have a considerable impact on our societies and economies.
- Stressing that the evolving threat picture requires action and better preparedness also against possible terrorist attacks involving CBRN materials.

Particularly in light of the two recently foiled attacks involving the biological agent Ricin in France and Germany, it is time for Member State governments to shoulder their responsibilities and put these good intentions into action. I am convinced that a clear statement from the European Council would provide the impetus for Member State administrations to put in place the measures legally required by the EU Directive on Combatting Terrorism to ensure the protection of the EU's citizens.

We would encourage you most strongly to ensure that these issues are discussed and are reflected in the official conclusions of the European Council meeting of 28/29 June.

Best regards,

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Caterina Chinnici, MEP (S&D)

Nathalie Griesbeck, MEP (ALDE)

Monika Hohlmeier, MEP (EPP)