Initiative of the Kingdom of Spain setting up a European network for the protection of public figures

(2002/C 42/08)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 29 thereof,

Having regard to the initiative of the Kingdom of Spain,

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament,

Whereas:

(1) No European Union legislation, standards or manuals of a general nature exist to govern the protection of public figures, whether they be national public figures or those of Community or foreign origin.

(2) Dignitaries and public figures have been assassinated or attacked on a number of occasions and, although it is improbable, there is nothing to prevent such incidents recurring in future,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

A European network for the protection of public figures, hereinafter known as 'the network', is hereby created.

The network shall be chaired by the national authority with responsibility for the protection of public figures of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council.

The network shall be assisted by the Secretariat of the Council.

Article 2

The network shall consist of contact points of the national police departments with responsibility for the protection of public figures, designated by each Member State.

Candidate countries for accession to the European Union, the Commission and Europol may also designate a contact point to be included in the network.

Article 3

In addition to furthering cooperation and collaboration between the police departments with responsibility for the protection of public figures, the network shall have the following objectives:

(a) exchanging information, officials and experience concerned with the protection of public figures;

(b) standardising criteria for selecting and training appropriate staff with responsibility in each Member State for the protection of public figures;

(c) setting up a database on, in particular, assaults and attacks on public figures, case studies and methods used;

(d) approximating the existing rules and regulations in each Member State.

Article 4

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, the network shall be competent to:

(a) simplify the procedures by drawing up a standard form in all Member States;

(b) determine the maximum number of armed officials according to the public figure involved and the resources to be deployed;

(c) outline the conditions for provision of service by officials with responsibility for the protection of a public figure of one Member State when they are in or enter another Member State;

(d) study common methods of action to prevent assaults and attacks;

(e) adopt joint protocols on the priority granted to the protected public figure during movements of delegations;

(f) collaborate with other police forces and other departments;

(g) establish common rules to be observed in connection with accreditation and media access to the public figure involved.

Article 5

The network shall, each year, draw up its operating budget, which will be approved by the Council.

Article 6

The Council shall carry out an evaluation of the network's activities two years after this Decision takes effect.

Article 7

This Decision shall take effect on the day following that of its adoption by the Council.

Done at . . .

For the Council

The President

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