



Terrorism – Are We Ready?

26th October 2016

EuroCOP Conference Report

Preamble

Delegates from the member organisations of EuroCOP and other guest police unions from across Europe gathered in Barcelona in order to discuss the highly important topic of terrorism.

Significant contributions from internationally recognised experts (including prosecutors, academics, law enforcement professionals, police union officials, and politicians) delivered over a number of separate panel sessions resulted in one of the most comprehensive discussions ever held by police unions on this subject.

Introduction

EuroCOP President Angels Bosch welcomed all to the conference and delivered the following speech:

Ladies, Gentlemen and honoured guests. It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you to this landmark conference in the beautiful city of Barcelona.

The reason I say landmark is simply because I can think of no other occasion that has brought so many of Europe's police unions, federations and associations together to discuss and debate what is arguably one of the most important issues for all Europeans at this time – and that is terrorism.

We are very lucky to have secured the attendance of highly talented and knowledgeable speakers and I would like to extend a special thanks to them for taking the time out of their busy schedules to be able to support EuroCOP on this subject. There is no doubt in my mind that your contributions will make our conference a great success!

Terrorism is of course not a new threat to Europe or its citizens, and many of us have come from policing backgrounds that have experienced and dealt with terrorism going back over many decades.

As many of those terrorist organisations and networks became less and less active we have seen the resolve and determination of Europeans to not allow terrorism to destroy our way of life or the freedoms we enjoy, grow and grow. Many of us have lost friends and colleagues and each occasion an attack takes places, the determination of police officers to defeat these cowardly criminals gets stronger.

But whilst terrorism itself is not new, there is no doubt that the type of terrorism we are now facing in Europe has created exceptional challenges. Marauding active shooters, multiple coordinated attacks, on line extremism, radicalisation, and of course the increased frequency of attacks on ordinary citizens and not just infrastructure, mean that Europeans have never needed their police more than now.

It is the first duty of government to protect their citizens and we must make sure that they deliver on that duty with more than words.

Words alone will not stop a bullet or a bomb.

Words will not gather intelligence to be able to stop an attack and

Words will be of little comfort to the families of those who are killed or injured while protecting others.

Police officers cannot safeguard the fundamental freedoms we, as European citizens have all come to enjoy if we ourselves are not protected.

Improvements in police training and equipment have come about because of the work of police unions.

Improvements in the career opportunities for women and those with caring responsibilities have come about because of tireless campaigning by police unions.

Improvements in working patterns for police officers that now mean we are less likely to be exhausted at our place of work, have come about because of police unions.

Reductions in workplace accidents meaning we have fewer police officers absent from work due to avoidable injury, is down to police unions.

And let us not forget that whilst police officers are our members, it is the responsibility of our police leaders to look after them. We will never apologise for reminding them of that responsibility and making sure that they do.

All of these things mean we have police officers all over Europe who are much more able to respond to incidents and events than they would be were it not for police unions.

And so it is with terrorism. Police officers need a voice and need to be able to communicate their concerns. Let there be no doubt that police concerns should be public concerns - whether a lack of equipment, intelligence or officers, these are issues that increase risks to us all and police unions will not stand by silently and allow that to happen.

We know our police chiefs have difficult decisions to make and we know the terrorism challenge has grown at a time when police budgets and resources have not. We cannot allow that to continue and we will fight to make sure our leaders have the resources they need to ensure the safety of their officers and by extension, our citizens

I hope you enjoy this conference and take something from it. Its success is down to every one of us playing our part.

Thank you.

Welcome by L'Hble Conseller d'interior (The Hon. Minister of Interior) Jordi Jane

Conseller Jane welcomed the Conference to Barcelona and thanked EuroCOP for arranging to host this conference on the internationally important subject of terrorism. He extended a special thanks to Angels Bosch and the Mossos d'Esquadra who were on duty ensuring the safety of the event.

He provided a brief history of the police and judiciary in Catalonia and reiterated that it was of the utmost importance that all relevant agencies worked together and shared information to defeat terrorism. He stated that police agencies including Mossos should be involved in international forums considering terrorism and not have to rely on third hand information from others.

Conseller Jane reminded the conference that on 9 September 2014 the global leader of Daesh (ISIS/ISIL) addressed a statement to young Muslims specifically asking them to target police officers. He thereafter provided a detailed list of the specific terror attacks including in France, Belgium and Denmark, on police officer that resulted in fatalities.

He made mention of a number of programmes to reduce radicalisation but concluded by reiterating his opening remarks on the importance of collaboration.

Session 1 Radicalisation & Fundamentalism

Juan Jose Llaguno (ErNE) acted as facilitator and introduced the session. He welcomed the speakers and thanked them for attending.

He advised that police forces have been asking if they are ready for the terror threat since 9/11. He suggested that it was clear processes for radicalisation and indoctrination were being targeted at European born Muslims. He also suggested western society was increasingly radicalised and that it was increasingly common to encounter very negative views about Islam.

He further commented on the many attacks that had taken place across Europe in recent times and in particular that the Modus Operandi was constantly changing. This presented unique policing challenges. It was clear the objective of terrorism is to frighten the citizens and to believe they could be at risk at any time and in any place. He observed that this was working and that as a consequence it was apparent citizens were willing to surrender liberties in the fight against terrorism.

Mr. David Garriga, Criminologist, Specialist on Islamic Terrorism, addressed the Conference. He advised that part of the ISIS strategy was to be in the news as often as possible. In doing so this created the perception that ISIS was something substantial and very much part of the modern world. There can be no doubt that the strategy has worked.

Mr Garriga advised that in order to recruit, terror groups required to have a certain appeal and as such it was important to invest much more in prevention. He also opined there was a need for much more training to help determine those who are radicalised and those who are not.

He stated that in addition to the training of police officers, that society itself had to be trained. In particular there was a role for teachers, health staff, as well as families themselves.

It was important to ensure those returning from countries in which ISIS was operating were asked questions to see if any useful intelligence could be found.

Mr Garriga stated that disillusioned youngsters who lacked a sense of identity were often targeted by recruiters. They appealed as they were able to suggest that by being members of their organisations they would have an identity and purpose.

Mr. Carlos Bautista Samanego, Doctor in Law, addressed the Conference and stated in response to the title of the conference that we are more ready than before.

He further stated that it was easier for terrorists to be effective as they were willing to use items like knives in a manner that wasn't common before. He went on to comment that many decades of dealing with "western Terrorists (like ETA) had not prepared police for the terrorist threat presented by ISIS.

In the past terrorists were more likely to target infrastructure and institutions like banks to secure funding for their existence whereas the attention of the terrorist of today had become much more random.

Mr. Bautista Samanego, like Mr.Garriga, commented that jihadi terrorism was a special form of terrorism that relied heavily on indoctrination of recruits. He stated that there was a need to be able to identify those who indoctrinate and to be able to criminalise them. In some cases this might require the creation of special laws.

He gave examples from a recent case where a suspect was tried but an insufficiency of evidence saw the case dismissed. This was despite the suspect had videos which depicted killings and dismemberments. It was realised this suspect was using the videos to help indoctrinate others and that in total he had over 200 videos that originated from ISIS. The suspect was also known to have had military training and had been described by associates as weird.

In addition to indoctrination the videos were typical of those used as propaganda by ISIS.

Mr. Bautista Samanego, advised the conference that over 300 cases for indoctrination had been raised and this represented only 40% of suspects. He concluded by identifying specific activities that should be deployed to gather evidence against those who cause indoctrination.

Mr. Paul Van Tigchelt, Director of OCAM, (Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis) Belgium addressed the conference and provided some background on the high profile attacks in France and Belgium.

He reported that the cell that arranged the attacks in Paris and on Brussels airport was 30 strong. Of that 30, 17 were in the inner circle and of those 17, 13 had been killed and the other 4 arrested. He told conference that all of them knew each other and had grown up together. At some time most of them had been to Syria and all had criminal records and had links to serious crime. In short all were known to the police.

Mr. Van Tigchelt thereafter reported that the OCAM list which detailed suspected foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) contained 630 suspects of which over 100 were women. He stated that 280 were suspected to be still in Syria or Iraq and that 110 were "possibly killed." Those possibly killed remained on the list until the death was confirmed.

He identified that there was a need to tackle social media propaganda but that it was also important that all radicalisation was not "judicialised" (looking once through curiosity for

example). Social media preventative actions needed to be put in place and the constant reminding that the problem was Islamism and not Islam was important.

Speaking on the importance of cooperation, Mr Van Tighelt reminded the conference that no single European agency knows who all of the 4,000+ terrorist nominals of interest are.

Session 2 Terrorism are we ready

Claus Redder Madsen (Politiforbundet) acted as facilitator and introduced the session. He welcomed the speakers and thanked them for attending.

He identified that terrorism has already had a significant impact on policing in Denmark. There has been an uplift in officers in central intelligence and new equipment like vests had been issued. He reminded the meeting of the catalogue of horrific attacks on police since Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 and commented that Europe remained on high alert.

Mr. Manuel Navarrete Panaqua, EuroPOLs European Counter Terrorism Centre Director addressed the conference and thanked EuroCOP for arranging such an event. He stated it was important organisations like EuroCOP were able to tell policy makers what the priorities are and that it was equally important policy makers listened.

Mr Navarrete Panaqua provided an insight into the work of EuroPOL and stated the sharing of intelligence was a main pillar of their activities. This was not always easy as the question of sovereignty would arise but it has become increasingly clear that interdependence and reliance on each other was making this easier.

The conference was advised that 670 law enforcement agencies from 43 countries were connected to the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA)

He reminded the conference that security was not a main pillar of the EU as the EU is primarily an economic body. However it is clear that there is now a need to tackle the security question internationally. EuroPOL provides a support and coordination function to enable agencies to do this.

The Conference was advised that EuroPOL was able to assist organisations with strategic analysis; internet investigations; operational support and coordination as well as direct and immediate on the spot support.

Mr. Pierre Philippe Labbe, Capitan PNF, Liaison Officer on terrorism at the French Embassy in Madrid addressed the conference and dedicated his contribution to the police officers who were murdered by terrorists in Paris.

He identified that amongst some of the tactics deployed in France in response to the terrorism activities included the removal of passports from suspected FTFs as well as the removal of the dual French citizenship enjoyed by some (where this is held).

He reiterated that terrorism is a threat in all countries and that the apparent chaotic approach by radicalised individuals meant an attack could occur almost anywhere and at almost any time.

Mr Labbe reminded the conference that interdependencies demanded states cooperate more than more. He highlighted that histories of cooperation, for example between Spain and France in response to the ETA threat have shown that collaboration is not to be feared and has a proven track record of success.

Mr. Jean Pierre Devos, Commissaris at Federal Police Belgium addressed the conference and advised delegates he was the most senior officer on duty at Brussels airport on the 22nd July 2016; the day the airport was attacked.

He provided the conference with an insight to the death and devastation that he and other officers had to deal with in the aftermath of the bombings. Mr Devos spoke of the shock and scenes of utter destruction that met him while he responded.

He thereafter spoke at length of the importance of collaborative working to ensure police activities are concentrated on prevention of terrorism and not simply responding to incidents when they occur. He stated it was preferable to be able to arrest suspects from their beds and that prevention was not only the responsibility of police and law enforcement agencies.

Mr Devos reminded the conference that the 9/11 Commission report identified that all terrorism is local in some way. Local responders will always be the first line of defence. National security depends on neighbourhood security. Local officers need to be alert to what is happening in their areas and partners need to be reminded that the police are not the only organisation responsible for delivering quality of life.

Mr Devos shared a copy of the Belgian Community Policing and Prevention of Radicalisation (CoPPRa) strategy and the identified characteristics in the hierarchy of terrorism indicators. A copy of the presentation by Mr Devos can be shared if requested.

Mr. Mark Lindsay, Chairman Police Federation for Northern Ireland addressed the conference and shared his experiences of living and working in an environment where terrorism was always at the forefront of minds. He gave an insight into the complexities that can exist when military personnel deploy alongside a civilian police service. In particular he identified risks is the state is seen to be the oppressor and the importance of learning from the experiences of others.

He started that a lack of front line resources creates an information vacuum that is dangerous and difficult to overcome.

It was important not to glamorise terrorists who are criminals and care needed to be paid to how these criminals are looked after in prison. He identified that many terrorists are radicalised in prisons and that criminals should not leave prison more radicalised than when they went in.

Speaking on the availability of open source information, Mr Lindsay reminded the conference that police officers needed to take greater care over their personal information as there was an increasing tendency to find police officers details easily on the internet.

Mr Lindsay reminded the conference of the need for officers not to make themselves a risk and encourages delegates to look to and learn the lessons from Northern Ireland.

Session 3 The importance of Civil Law

Max Hoffman (VSPB – FSFP) acted as facilitator and introduced the session. He welcomed the speakers and thanked them for attending.

Mr Hoffman identified that the previous session had set the scene for the question on the importance of the civilian rule of law and welcomed. He identified that there were legitimate questions to be asked in respect of increasing investment in military responses to terrorism were being used in place of investment in policing. He asked conference to consider whether military personnel should be performing policing functions.

Mr. Giovanni Conzo, Procuo di Napoli, Organized Crime addressed the conference and identified that much of the anti-mafia legislation in existence in Italy had proven to be useful in the fight against terrorism.

He specifically identified a number of measures deployed including the targeting of communications using viruses / trojans. He also reported that the imposing of curfews was a successful tactic as was the requirement for the surrender of residents permits for criminals. Mr Conzo also identified that Italy has well developed legislation to make seizure of assets an effective tactic.

Mr. Conzo highlighted that simply watching extremist videos could be deemed sufficient to justify a prosecution for a terrorist offence.

Speaking briefly on foreign policy, Mr Conzo stated that the bombs dropped in war zones created shrapnel that comes back to Europe. He stated that a European Prosecutors Office had yet to be created and that the European Arrest Warrant was an invaluable tool in helping bring suspects to justice.

Mrs. Ana Gil, Fiscal de crimen organizado de la Fiscalia Pruvincial de Barcelona, International Cooperation was welcomed to the conference. Mrs Gil spoke about the importance of common European Principles and values that underpinned our approaches to justice.

She stated that experience of cooperation between jurisdictions was well established but despite this it was possible for conflicts to arise. Multi jurisdiction investigations need to take cognisance not only of the law in the country you are in but the rules of evidence and admissibility in another country where an offence may have been committed.

Mrs Gil stated that there was a need for European rules to establish standards of criminal investigation and it was hoped such rules would be in place for May 2017.

Making reference to the contributions of Mr Conzo, Mrs Gil stated that the anti-mafia legislation could be considered as an example of approaches to undertake complex investigations.

She asked if the law in Europe was sufficiently flexible to identify the valuable role of intelligence and in particular how intelligence could provide the basis for prosecutions without divulging the methods.

Mr. José Maria, Fuster-Fabra Torrellas, Lawyer and Doctor of Law, Lawyer of terrorism victims addressed the conference. He spoke of the definition of terrorism where individuals were driven to commit crimes by a religious or political ideology.

Mr Fuster-Fabra Torrellas identified that terrorism was the only crime where a victim is used to hurt another victim (society). He also identified that there was an increased willingness amongst terrorists to confess to crimes only to later claim the confession was obtained by torture. This was placing additional pressures and strains on police officers and investigators who then faced lengthy investigations themselves. At the same time justice was delayed.

He equated the new and increased threat of terrorism to the experiences police agencies had of terrorism in the past as stepping up from 5 a side football to 11 a side. The tactics are completely different and require different thinking. This was particularly important as police understanding and responses has needed to evolve quickly.

Finally Mr Fuster-Fabra Torrellas submitted to conference that it should be possible to be tried in two countries for the same offence. It was anomalous that several countries could have victims of crime in one incident but only one could be able to bring the offenders to justice.

At the conclusion of each session all of the speakers answered a number of questions from the floor.

Angels Bosch
President
EuroCOP