



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 10 March 2010
7334/10 (Presse 56)

**Statement by the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator de
Kerchove on the 6th European Day on Remembrance of the
Victims of Terrorism**

In view of the 6th European Day on Remembrance of the Victims of Terrorism celebrated tomorrow, 11 March 2010, the EU Counter-terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove made the following statement and recorded a video interview which you can find here:

- [Interview](#)
- [Archive images](#)

"11 March is a day of remembrance and tribute to the victims of terrorism, their families, and their friends, not only in the EU, but also in the rest of the world.

Though there can never be enough compensation for the victims of terrorism, their families and their friends, the EU is committed to contributing, to the extent possible, to alleviate victims' pain and to support them in their needs, following the pioneering work some Member States have developed in this field.

P R E S S

I consider the promotion of international solidarity and assistance to the victims of terrorism as a priority for EU counter-terrorism policies, because victims of terrorism suffer in their flesh the attack of terrorists on the whole of Society.

Terrorists are criminals who de-humanize us in order to legitimize our killing; supporting the victims of terrorism is essential to deglamourize terrorism in the minds of those who consider terror a legitimate tool for political action.

I believe that policies of international solidarity with the victims of terrorism also offer strong prevention value by mobilizing civil society against the consequences of terrorism on ordinary citizens.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy includes de-humanization of victims as one of the conditions conducive to terrorism, and establishes the need for practical mechanisms of international solidarity with the victims of terrorism. We must put victims back at the center of justice.

The political will to further develop policies of international solidarity with the victims of terrorism has been already expressed in the Conclusions of the Council last October and in the Stockholm Program. The EU already has an acquis of law on the protection of victims and some Member States are already doing great work in this field, but we still need to improve.

I believe that policies of international solidarity and assistance to the victims of terrorism must be based on four core principles: Recognition, Memory, Justice and Reparation:.

- The victims of terrorism must be recognized as such by their governments.
- Memory must include individual and collective remembrance. Memory makes victims more visible, more known to us. It reminds us of the sacrifice imposed upon them for the values of freedom, democracy, security and justice that underpin EU societies.
- Justice systems should meet the expectations of those affected by terrorist acts, always within the framework of the Rule of Law and Human Rights. Victims should always have the option to be a party in the criminal proceedings against their attackers and accomplices.

- Reparation should require economic compensation for the personal damage inflicted upon victims, such as physical and psychological injuries, as well as compensation for their material losses.
Reparation should be the responsibility of governments, regardless of the result of the criminal proceedings. It should also require a set of social assistance measures that meet the needs of victims as long as necessary.

It is my expectation that the critical examination underway between the EU institutions, national organizations and non-governmental organizations will produce an actionable Commission proposal by the beginning of 2011 for a comprehensive instrument providing common minimum standards for international solidarity with the victims of terrorism, including measures to address the compensation to EU citizens who suffer a terrorist attack outside of the EU.

On 11 March, the day of remembrance of the largest terrorist massacre in the EU, I ask you all to think of our fellow citizens who have suffered a crime directed against all of us.

Let us pledge to never forget and always support them."
