

Wednesday, 5 September 2007 - Strasbourg

Fight against terrorism (debate)

Ana Maria Gomes (PSE). - (PT) (inaudible) ... the Council's reluctance to give Europol, Eurojust, the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the SitCen any institutional, legal or financial muscle, which could transform ad hoc links into a genuine strategic cooperation against terrorism. Various Member States have not yet even ratified the main international conventions in this field.

Al-Qaida and ETA do not respect borders or national sovereignty, but our police and secret services are still hampered by inadequate barriers. Europe needs to be not only more effective, but also more strict, because the anything-goes approach is precisely the way terrorists think and international terrorism did not in fact make its advance in New York, Bali, Madrid, London or even Baghdad. Its greatest triumph, which every day brings it more recruits, was handed to it by democratic governments, by the ease with which they sacrifice fundamental values, rights and guarantees: the pillars of democracy and civilisation.

Europe needs to clear its name, miserably besmirched by the systematic collaboration of European governments with the Bush Administration in the abduction, unlawful detention and torture of terrorist suspects. Parliament is still waiting for explanations from those governments. Europe needs to be more effective in strategic cooperation, internally and with its allies, in order to defeat terrorism but also in order to defeat it through political ideas and through law.

The Portuguese Presidency, under a socialist government, has an obligation to try to make a difference.