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# Press Release

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## **PRESS RELEASE BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

### *David Stellini participates in IIJ Workshop on Counter Terrorism*

Member of Parliament David Stellini highlighted the importance of carrying out automatic exchange of information and intelligence between EU countries to prevent terror attacks in the future and of establishing inter-operable IT border control systems that would immediately alert other authorities such as intelligence authorities, in case a threat is detected at the EU border.

David Stellini was speaking in a Regional Workshop on Counter Terrorism organised by the International Institute of Justice (IIJ) in Brussels on 2-3 May, which brought together parliamentarians and criminal justice practitioners. The workshop was the last in a series of workshops aimed at elaborating the recently-adopted 'Valletta Recommendations Relating to Contributions by Parliamentarians in Developing an Effective Response to Terrorism' adopted by the Global Counter Terrorism Forum.

In reply to his intervention, a representative of the Spanish Senate - who was participating as a panellist - said that exchanging information automatically is very important in counter-terrorism however, more work is needed for this to become a more effective tool in the future. Furthermore, emphasis should shift from detection to creating the much-needed legal tools that would enable authorities to have a more proactive role in preventing terror attacks.

The workshop was divided in four main sessions, the first of which focused on the role of parliamentarians in preventing the root causes of violent extremism followed by another session on strengthening cooperation with internet communication service providers to remove illegal content online. The third session looked at the issue of parliamentary oversight of intelligence in the context of rule of law-compliant counter-terrorism policies followed by another session focusing on building on the work of the IIJ in support of parliamentarians' role in counter-terrorism.

More concretely, the aim of the workshop was for the IIJ to gather feedback from participants on how to strengthen cooperation between legislators and criminal justice actors in the field of counter terrorism. The feedback gathered will be used when drafting a handbook to guide parliamentarians as to their responsibilities in countering terrorism. Among the participants were both representatives from non-EU countries such as Libya and Algeria as well as EU member states such as Spain, which experienced terror attacks in recent years and could share first-hand experience about measures taken in the aftermath of the attack particularly the prosecution of terror suspects and the preventive measures taken since.