



Commission statement on the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism

Paris, 11 March 2020

On the occasion of the 16th European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism, the Commission has issued the following statement:

"Today, we remember and honour all victims of terrorist atrocities, and we stand by those who grieve and those who endure the physical and psychological wounds of terrorist acts.

Terrorist attacks such as the ones that have struck at the heart of our Union in recent years are attacks on our values and our way of life. We will continue to stand firm against all who seek to hurt and divide our societies through hatred and violence and we will continue to build the EU's resilience against attacks of all natures. Everyone in our Union has the right to feel safe in their own streets and their own home.

It is our common responsibility to make sure no victim is left alone or forgotten and that our communities remain supportive. The EU will continue to support victims and their loved ones, protect their rights and guarantee that their voices are heard.

Those who have to live with the scars of terrorist acts need special support and care. Through the newly launched EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism, we provide Member States with expertise and guidance so they can assist victims in case of a terrorist attack.

On this day of remembrance, we stand united and strong in our commitment to build a Europe that protects and takes special care of victims of heinous acts."

Background

Fighting terrorism and protecting its victims are priorities for the Commission.

The EU has a strong legal framework in place to **support victims of terrorism**. The [Victims' Rights Directive](#) lays down a set of binding rights for all victims of crimes and corresponding obligations on Member States. In addition, the [Directive on Combating Terrorism](#) requires Member States to provide for access to professional, specialist support services, immediately after an attack and for as long as necessary. The [EU legislation on compensation](#) gives victims of violent, intentional crime a right to access national compensation schemes in cross-border cases.

In January 2020, the [EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism](#) set up by the Commission launched its activities. The Centre acts as a hub of expertise and aims to provide Member States and dedicated organisations with guidance, helping them to assist victims after a terrorist attack.

The Radicalisation Awareness Network, through its [working group on remembrance of victims of terrorism](#), presents victims' experiences, contributes to the remembrance of all victims of terrorism, and highlights the human consequences of violent extremism.

Victims' rights and support to them are also at the heart of work carried out by the [European Network of Associations of Victims of Terrorism](#), set up by the Commission.

In addition, the Commission is now working on a new Strategy for Victims' Rights for 2020-2024 to be presented this year. The strategy will focus on empowering victims of crime, strengthening cooperation and coordination between national authorities, improving protection and support to victims and facilitating access to compensation, and will pay special attention to the most vulnerable victims such as victims of terrorism.

To **prevent terrorist offences** in the first place, the EU is active in fighting terrorist propaganda – offline and online, denying terrorists the means and the space to plan, finance and carry out attacks, and countering radicalisation. The [Directive on Combating Terrorism](#) ensures that terrorism-related offences are criminalised and heavily sanctioned across Europe. [New EU rules on firearms](#) make it harder to legally acquire high capacity weapons, while the recently-adopted [Regulation on the marketing and use of explosives precursors](#) restricts access to chemical substances that could be used to make home-made explosives.

The Commission has driven action to counter radicalisation, both offline and online. The Radicalisation

Awareness Network brings together practitioners from all Member States to develop best practices, and equips them with the skills they need to address violent extremism. The Commission also [proposed](#) legislation to ensure that terrorist content is removed within one hour.

The fight against terrorism will be a key element of the **new Security Union Strategy** that the Commission will present in the first half of this year.

The European Day of Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism was established after the Madrid Bombings of 11 March 2004. Each year since 2005, the European Union remembers on this date the victims of terrorist atrocities worldwide.

For More Information

[Victims of terrorism - Webpage](#)

[EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism - Webpage](#)

[Upcoming event](#) - 16th European Day of Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism, Wednesday 11 March 2020

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