

**Personal remarks by Prof. Danuta Hübner
Secretary of State for European Integration
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
to the Convention on the Future of Europe
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Justice and Home Affairs

Presidency, Dear Colleagues,

In Poland we appreciate the need for citizens within the Union to feel free but safe in the Union. Obviously the great bonus of freedom of movement within the enlarged Union must be accompanied by measures to ensure that cross-border crime does not eventually destroy the freedoms we have created for ourselves.

I would like to briefly underline three points.

1. the need to carry citizens with us in the development of policy on justice and home affairs – the delicate balance between liberty and control
2. the need to concentrate on cross-border issues
3. the particular challenges posed by enlargement.

The need to carry citizens with us in the development of policy on justice and home affairs and the delicate balance between liberty and control

Of all the policy areas in the Union, justice and home affairs is that which has developed fastest and furthest in the last few years. Recently it has been given a further impulse by the global fight against terrorism. The Union has not simply made plans for the future but starting from Tampere has made solid progress in implementing these plans.

However there is no other area which is less well known to our citizens and is less transparent than Justice and Home Affairs. I fear a major backlash against Union action in this area unless a far greater effort is put into information and open discussion. The balance between liberty and control is very delicate and can only be successfully achieved if there is general support for the principles on which it is based.

2. the need to concentrate on cross-border issues

The debate on competence we have had so far should also be reflected in the debate on justice and home affairs. The Union should concentrate on those areas of internal security in which value-added is contributed – essentially this means through tackling first of all cross-border issues.

This is also reflected in the results of the last Eurobarometer poll, quoted in the background paper for this meeting. People expect the Union to tackle the fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings, the fight against organized crime and

the fight against drugs. These are all clearly cross-border issues, where the citizens understand very well that they cannot just be tackled nationally.

In many ways justice and home affairs is fundamentally different from other areas of Union policy. But it is similar in two ways: firstly it is a logical whole and the problem is to know where the cut-off point between Union level and national action comes; secondly it is dependent on mutual trust.

3. the particular challenges posed by enlargement.

Being a Polish citizen I cannot omit the issue of protection of the Union's external borders. In the near future Poland will be responsible for protecting a considerable part of these borders. This is why I believe that it is necessary to develop further the existing forms of cooperation aimed at strengthening the operational capacity in this domain. I consider the proposal of a well balanced joint border guard system as one of the forms for such a strengthened cooperation. Timely common understanding on these issues would contribute immensely to the improvement of the security of people in Europe.

Thank you