

Readout of Secretary Napolitano's Visit to Belgium



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Brussels, Belgium—Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today met with members of the European Parliament to discuss the importance of guarding against threats of terrorism while protecting privacy and civil liberties.

“Confronting borderless threats like terrorism requires close international cooperation,” said Secretary Napolitano. “Through strengthened information sharing partnerships, we are better able to secure our borders and interdict terrorists and criminals while protecting the privacy of law-abiding citizens.”

During the meeting—led by European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties and Home Affairs Chairman Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar and European Parliament Delegation on Relations with the United States Vice-Chairwoman Baroness Sarah Ludford—Secretary Napolitano highlighted 12 successful information sharing agreements between the United States and its European allies that incorporate strong privacy protections, including pacts with Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal signed since January.

While in Brussels, Secretary Napolitano also met with World Customs Organization (WCO) Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya to discuss multilateral efforts to crack down on currency smuggling and strengthen risk-based cargo screening.

Secretary Napolitano also emphasized the United States’ commitment to coordinating with the international community to combat the global effects of the H1N1 virus.

Earlier this week, Secretary Napolitano met with her international counterparts in Denmark, Spain and the United Kingdom—building on the progress made during previous trips to Europe this year. She discussed information sharing and privacy protection; collaborative efforts to secure cyber networks worldwide; international response to the H1N1 global pandemic; and coordination to combat transnational criminal activity and the global threat of terrorism.

Since January, Secretary Napolitano has launched partnerships and bolstered international engagement around the world—facilitating improved information sharing and better protection against violent extremism.

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