



PRESS RELEASE

FACE: EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR HUNTING & CONSERVATION

The European Council clamps down on hunters and sport shooters

The Dutch Presidency proposed to ban Category D and reproductions of antique firearms, currently not regulated at EU level, while obliging sport shooters to join recognized associations.

June 3, 2016, Brussels - In the name of the fight against terrorism and organized crime, the Dutch Presidency proposed to ban reproductions of antique firearms and deleting the entire category D while imposing repressive regulations on sport shooters.

In its last bid to close the deal before the end of the semester and without the slightest consultation, the Dutch Presidency of the Council aimed at hunters by removing from the text of the Firearms Directive the exception for reproductions of antique weapons (single shot firearms loaded from the muzzle), which are used by hunters in some countries, target shooters, collectors, and for historical re-enactments.

The same restrictive approach is adopted against sport shooters with new constraints on the size of the magazines and introducing obligatory membership of a shooting organisation and making it conditional to participation to sports competitions.

Who will believe that the removal of the Category D and the prohibition of reproductions of antique firearms will effectively contribute to the fight against organized crime and terrorism? No report highlighted that reproduction of antique firearms constitute a danger for security and society. Criminals using Kalashnikovs and arms dealers who supply terrorists on the black market will not be affected by these new constraints which exclusively hit honest citizens, legal owners of single-shot reproductions of antique firearms.

The ban of reproductions, will have a relevant economic impact, as these firearms are currently sold in many EU Members States namely France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, an important share of the market. This provision will immediately condemn to bankruptcy several small and medium enterprises and jeopardise the jobs of thousands in the EU.

The 12 million legal owners will undergo substantial additional constraints, with a proliferation of new administrative procedures.

In addition the Dutch Presidency seeks to move single-shot long firearms with smooth-bore barrels, alarm and signal weapons, deactivated firearms to Category C. This broadening of the scope of Category C is not justified by any criterion of dangerousness and is therefore not acceptable.

The consequences on administrations cannot be determined in the absence of an impact assessment but are likely to trigger the clogging of national registration systems for the coming years and an increase of administrative costs.

For FACE, these unnecessary and draconian measures will provoke the anger of the 12 million law abiding citizens who will be wondering why the EU does not focus on the real public safety issues such as traceability of weapons, their irreversible deactivation and interoperability of databases.

*****ENDS*****

NOTES TO EDITORS:

FACE is the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation. Established in 1977, **FACE represents the interests of Europe's 7 million hunters** as an international non-profit-making nongovernmental organisation. FACE is made up of national hunters' associations from 35 European countries including the EU-28. FACE is supported by 7 associate members and is based in Brussels.

FACE is the largest democratically representative body for hunters in the world, with elections for its statutory bodies taking place every three years. Each country represented within FACE receives one vote.

FACE upholds the principle of sustainable use, has been a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1987, and more recently of Wetlands International. FACE works with its partners on a range of hunting-related issues, from international conservation agreements to local implementations with the aim of sustaining hunting across Europe.

More on www.face.eu.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS, QUOTES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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