

## International press release

### Security checks by the National Security Authority (NSA)



Security checks allow the Belgian National Security Authority (NSA) to assess whether the exercise of a function or access to a location implies risks, by having the Federal Police, the State Security (civil intelligence service) and the General Intelligence and Security Service (military intelligence service) consult the legally determined databases. Based on the results, what is called a security advice or certificate can be issued to the person concerned. The Belgian Court of Audit examined whether the regulations on security checks and the administrative structure and working methods of the NSA guarantee the consistent, efficient and high-quality performance of security checks and the issuing of security advice and certificates by the NSA.

The Court noted that the NSA's regulations, structure and working methods leave room for improvement. It must become clearer which security interests are essential and on which criteria a person is to be assessed. The process should be digitalised to increase efficiency and quality assurance. Public guidelines with assessment criteria and thresholds should be developed too. There is a growing need to evolve towards a system of continuous monitoring, where any new fact about persons who have already undergone a security check would be quickly taken into account and, if necessary, lead to a reassessment. There is also a need for a more centralised management of the NSA with adequate capacity and resources within a global security policy.

The Belgian federal Ministers for Defence, Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs announced that they would heed the Court's conclusions and recommendations for the NSA's reform that is currently being prepared.