

Greece holding terror suspect

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By Kerin Hope in Athens

Greek police yesterday confirmed they held a suspected member of November 17, the elusive terrorist group blamed for the killing in 2000 of Brigadier Stephen Saunders, defence attaché at the UK embassy.

Fotis Nasiakos, Greece's police chief, said fingerprints found on a car used by N17 in an earlier killing matched those of Savvas Xeros, a

church icon painter injured in a botched bomb attack last weekend in Athens' port, Piraeus. Mr Xeros is in custody in hospital.

On Wednesday, police found anti-tank rockets, automatic weapons, N17 declarations and a flag with the group's five-pointed star logo in an apartment in Kato Patissia, a residential district of Athens, that had been rented by Mr Xeros. Mr Nasiakos said the group had

used the apartment as a hideout for several years.

Mr Xeros is the first N17 member to be taken into custody. The group, which has an anti-western and nationalist stance, is held responsible for more than 20 killings in its 27-year history.

Costas Simitis, Greece's prime minister, said there was still "much to be done in dismantling the terrorists' network, gathering evidence and making arrests".