

## **Joint Declaration**

**by the Ministers of the Interior of the Republic of Austria,  
the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the  
Republic of Slovakia and the Republic of Slovenia**

Salzburg, July 26-28, 2001 (Unofficial Translation)

---

The ministers of the interior of the Republic of Austria, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovakia and the Republic of Slovenia have held a meeting from July 26 thru 28, 2001. Upon invitation of Austria also the EU Commissioner for Justice and Security participated in this meeting.

The aim of the meeting was to foster ways and possibilities for a full participation of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovakia and the Republic of Slovenia in the European area of freedom, security and law, by means of an open and constructive dialogue.

The ministers acknowledged the considerable progress of the participating candidate countries with regard to their adaptation to EU- and Schengen standards, particularly in respect of border and entry control, visa and readmission policy, as well as in the field of police cooperation.

The participants are aware of the fact that increasing and uncontrolled migration flows through the region bring along serious problems both for the EU altogether and also for the participating countries. Therefore the ministers agreed upon the basic importance of a regional cooperation and the necessity of improving security standards, with the help of strong support by the EU.

In this connection the participants stressed the great importance of safeguarding an effective and operative protection of the future external borders of the EU.

The participants confirmed that the stability process in South East Europe represents one of the most important questions for maintaining peace in the region and stressed the necessity of supporting all efforts of incorporating the countries of this region into the structures of the EU, being their common goal of integration. The participants therefore support a regional cooperation with regard to specific aspects in the field of security. Especially they welcome the intention of the EU, to support appropriate activities by means of special programs of financing.

The participants acknowledged also the contribution and important activities within the member states by the Budapest Group, as well as by the Migration and Asylum Initiative of the stability pact for Southeast Europe, as well as the activities of the international border police conference.

In this connection special relevance is given also to regional cooperation in the field of asylum and migration matters in view of a participation of candidate states in the European area of freedom, security and law.

The participants noted with satisfaction that in the course of accession negotiations with the EU a considerable breakthrough was reached. A regional cooperation could accelerate the process of introduction, implementation and enforcement of the EU's acquis.

In order to reach these goals, the participants of the forum adopted this

### **Declaration on Security Partnerships**

as an explicit expression of their political intent, to establish a common Europe with a new form of security and law for all citizens of Europe, as well as to leverage a considerable upswing in the region.

Austria supports the participating accession candidates on their way to the European Union. Special attention has to be turned to acquiring full Schengen maturity as soon as possible.

Therewith the members of this security partnership are accomplishing a direct contribution to the build-up of an undivided European area of freedom, security and law.

However, this goal setting requires from the participating partner countries a continuation of efforts in order to ensure a high security standard for this region. Bilateral and regional cooperation therefore requires a new quality.

The Republic of Austria, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovakia and the Republic of Slovenia are accomplishing by this security partnership an important contribution to the internal security and stability in the region. This is a direct benefit for all citizens.

In this sense the participants determined that the following fields of such a special form of cooperation are to be considered as the most important ones:

1. **POLICE COOPERATION** – Close cooperation on operational level as well as close cooperation in their border regions, in order to combat all forms of organized crime.
2. **BORDER CONTROL** - Development of a joint and concerted strategy and concrete measures of cross-border cooperation, in particular joint concepts for efficient border surveillance, training of staff and technical equipment.
3. **PEOPLE TRAFFICKING** – Improvement of information exchange and cooperation between authorities, development of joint concepts for the prevention of people trafficking and facilitating, exploitation of women and children, as well as an adaptation of visa and entry policies to currently applicable EU visa and entry provisions, including Schengen provisions and procedures.
4. **ASYLUM** – Harmonisation of admission standards and safeguarding of procedures in compliance with best practices in Europe.

5. **EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS ON PARTICULAR EU MATTERS** – regular talks and information exchange on developments in the European Union in the above mentioned fields.

**For a new quality of regional cooperation and a steady improvement of the high security standard for the region and its citizens in a common Europe**

**Salzburg, 27 July 2001**

Biernacki  
Gross

Strasser  
Pinter

Bohinc  
Simko