



SALZBURG FORUM MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Bucharest, 17 October 2013

COMMON CONCLUSIONS

Upon the invitation of the Romanian Presidency of the Salzburg Forum, the Home Affairs Ministers of the Salzburg Forum Member States met in Bucharest, Romania, on the 17th of October 2013. Their aim was to coordinate activities regarding current issues and to agree upon future political initiatives relevant for the EU and regional cooperation.

Based on the 18-month work programme 2012-2013, the ongoing Romanian Presidency of the Salzburg Forum coordinated its activities with Hungary and Poland, Romania's partners in the trio-presidency of the Salzburg Forum.

Besides the regular ministerial meetings of all Salzburg Forum members, the Ministerial Conference also included a working session with the Friends of the Salzburg Forum from the Western Balkans. In this framework, there was consensus among the Ministers to continue strengthening regional cooperation with the Western Balkan states and the Republic of Moldova.

The Salzburg Forum Ministerial Conference also provided the framework for Ministers for extensive discussion with the representative of the European Commission, the directors of EU agencies Frontex, EASO, Europol, the director of ICMPD towards more practical EU policies and joint action in the fields of control of EU External Borders, Asylum as well as fight against Organised Crime.

Recognising the importance of the Salzburg Forum as a flexible and informal initiative on internal security, and yet an effective instrument for strategic and practical cooperation,

Committed to continue their contribution to strengthening the European area of freedom, security and justice,

The Home Affairs Ministers of the Salzburg Forum Member States have agreed on the following:

The future of JHA policies – the new multiannual post-Stockholm Programme in the area of Home Affairs

Member States of the Salzburg Forum agreed to promote further development of the common area of freedom, security and justice and declared their will to play a decisive role in the process of shaping the post-Stockholm Programme. The Ministers agreed upon the necessity that the

Salzburg Forum should contribute to the future debates that are to take place at the level of the Council and European Council. This contribution is necessary as the Ministers will be responsible for the implementation of the future operational and legislative guidelines for the area of freedom, security and justice.

The Ministers welcomed the idea of discussing the topic in the relevant preparatory bodies of the Council - COSI, CATS and SCIFA and agreed that the Salzburg Forum general coordinators start drafting a paper on this issue. The reflection on the future Programme should focus on ways of consolidating the progress made so far in the JHA area.

They agreed that the future programme should be based on the full implementation of the Stockholm Programme. The future work in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice should build upon the objectives of the Stockholm Programme that haven't been met and should aim at implementing, consolidating and making the best use of the existing instruments.

They highlighted that the post-Stockholm Programme should give high priority to the fight against cross-border crime, the enhancement of operational police cooperation, taking into account the challenges posed by Organised Crime and related to Cyber Security and Cybercrime. It should support a holistic approach to the fight against criminality focusing also on its root causes. The future JHA multiannual framework should facilitate regional cooperation and support regional cooperation initiatives (e.g. the Salzburg Forum). Special attention should also be paid to a more comprehensive migration policy, including the issue of integration, to the growing migratory pressure that affects both EU and its neighboring countries.

They acknowledged the necessity of a swift and full implementation of the Common European Asylum System and further steps towards advanced practical cooperation are to be considered with the support of the European Asylum Support Office.

One of the key challenges should be guaranteeing social cohesion of our societies, strengthening the respect for EU fundamental rights and implementing further measures against radicalization and recruitment. The fight against terrorism should be based on a comprehensive approach, especially focusing on prevention.

The Ministers agreed that a successful implementation of EU policies relies on adequate funding. In this respect, the new Multiannual Financial Framework – 2014-2020 - has to be taken into account when defining the priorities for the post – Stockholm Programme. At the same time, new priorities within this Programme should also lead to new financial priorities.

The Ministers agreed that the future Programme should reflect the joint efforts of the EU Institutions, Member States, relevant agencies, thus ensuring the convergence and the legitimacy of the objectives.

Cybercrime – a challenge for the European Union

Organised crime is getting more and more dynamic and complex. The effects of globalisation on the business environment together with the shortages of legislations lead to the changing nature of crime. Nowadays, the organised crime groups have the ability of acting internationally, a very encouraging factor being the Internet.

The Ministers acknowledged the importance of properly combating cybercrime, by including this as a priority under the new multiannual financing programme. The Internal Security Fund is open to

projects that can involve states of the Western Balkans, so the Ministers of the Salzburg Forum Member States, together with their Friends from the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova reaffirm their willingness of working together. Here can be taken into consideration the possibility of granting assistance to the Friends of the Forum in establishing Centres of Excellence to path their way towards the EU.

The Ministers attached great importance to carrying out the strategic goals under the new EU Policy Cycle 2014-2017 and the Operational Action Plans.

The Member States of the Salzburg Forum agreed to remain committed to contribute to the successful implementation of the EU Cyber Security Strategy: an Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace and to cooperate at the fullest extent possible with the newly created European Cybercrime Center at EUROPOL.

A better management of the issue cannot be done without the involvement of all relevant stakeholders like financial actors, software companies and Internet providers. A close dialogue with all stakeholders must be further carried on in order to find concrete ways of preventing and better combating Internet crimes. And both the public and the private sector need to help users raise their awareness regarding the risks of the cyberspace.

The Ministers agreed that, on the international level, there is an adequate legislative framework – Budapest Convention - that creates the necessary basis for the setting up of proper national legislation and the protection of human rights in all Member States.

An advanced cooperation with the Friends of the Forum should build upon the results of the CyberCrime@IPA regional project, implemented by the Council of Europe. They agreed on the importance of coordinating the curricula of all the Centers in the region for the benefit of investigators and prosecutors.

Mutual support for candidates from the Salzburg Forum states

Polish candidature for Deputy Director of Europol

The Ministers took note of the presentation of the Polish candidate for the position of Europol Deputy Director and committed themselves to coordinate a joint position of the Salzburg Forum Member States as regards the support for the Polish candidate.

Future of COSI

After three and a half years after the establishment of the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), a discussion on its achievements and its actual and potential added value for the JHA is welcomed.

The Ministers were of the opinion that the question on whether the competences of COSI should be widened or not, is to be answered only after a thorough inter-institutional consultation. When dealing with the future of COSI, its role with regard to the external dimension of EU internal security should be taken into consideration.

Regional cooperation

The Ministers evaluated positively the activities of the experts' working groups.

Witness protection

Successful prosecution goes inevitably along with effective witness protection programmes. According to this, it is obvious that such mechanisms play an important role in the Salzburg Forum Member States' efforts to fight international and organised crime. The enhancement of cooperation in this area is necessary to improve the security situation in the region and of the witnesses concerned.

The Ministers took note of the outcome of the Experts Working Group on Witness Protection held in Sibiu from 24 to 25 September 2013. They agreed upon the efficiency of discussions related to the implementation of the Agreement of cooperation on witness protection, pros and cons regarding international relocation, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation and of the meetings in the Salzburg Forum format, which offer the proper frame for thematic discussion and identification of the best solutions for the challenges in this field.

Traffic safety

Cross-border enforcement (CBE) of traffic fines is a major challenge within the European Union due to different national legislations and long lasting administrative procedures concerning traffic violations.

The Ministers took note of the outcome of the Salzburg Forum Expert Workshop on Cross Border Enforcement held in Bucharest from 18 to 19 September 2013.

They welcomed the continuation of discussions on the implementation of the legislation on facilitating the cross-border exchange of information on road safety-related traffic offences which affect each Member States of the Salzburg Forum. They agreed on the need of a constructive approach by all European partners as regards the implementation of Commission Recommendation 2004/345/EC on enforcement in the field of road safety and of Directive 2011/82/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council facilitating the cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences and they agreed to further follow up on this matter. They further welcomed the ongoing implementation of the Agreement on Facilitating Cross-border Enforcement of Road Safety Related Traffic Offences, signed on 11 October 2012, between the Republic of Croatia, Hungary, the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Austria.

National medical emergency system

The Ministers appreciated the activities carried out within the experts working group, held in Bucharest on 12 September 2013, with a two-fold structure: a **theoretical/technical** component and an **operational** one – which included visits and practical/live demonstrations. The SMURD was the main subject of the Working Group, a unique service in Europe and at the level of the Member States of the Salzburg Forum.

The participants agreed that the medical component is a key element of the response to emergency situations / disasters and that an integrated response system that would be made up

by a medical component, as well as a technical one (extrication) represents an approach that determines a very efficient response.

The Ministers agreed also to encourage their competent authorities to continue the dialogue and the exchange of good practices in the field of civil emergencies, where appropriate and on a voluntary basis.

Drug precursors

The Czech Republic informed other Member States about the initiative on drug precursors. Following the Joint Conclusions of the Ministerial Conference of the Salzburg Forum in Warsaw in April 2013, the Czech Republic prepared a questionnaire on the internal situation of the SF Member States regarding the availability of medical products consisting of drug precursors – such as pseudoephedrine and red phosphorus. The goal was to find a systematic solution which would prevent the source of the problem to spill over from one country to another. The answers of all Salzburg Forum Member States showed how different the regulation in individual countries is. The Ministers took note of the analysis and the conclusions of the Czech Republic regarding a stricter regulation on the sale of medicaments containing pseudoephedrine in Salzburg Forum Member States. On this basis, the Ministers agreed to further cooperate on this topic.

Effective approaches on the fight against illegal migration – a more effective management in 2014-2020

Ministers reiterated the importance of regional cooperation at both strategic and operational level, and the need for implementation of fast and efficient measures that provide sufficient capacity to competent institutions in each state to manage in a proper manner the evolution of immigration movement.

Considering all issues agreed during previous meetings, Ministers declared to promote active cooperation with countries of origin and transit, without disregarding the crucial role of improved border controls in limitation of abuses incurred in granting of international protection and in abuses of legal immigration channels. They reaffirmed the crucial need of operational cooperation including real-time information exchange as well as fostering effective return.

Reflecting on the recent tragic events in the Southern Mediterranean, Ministers also highlighted the emerging trends of illegal migration in the Eastern Mediterranean and via the Western Balkans. Ministers reaffirmed the need for commonly agreed solutions, supported by EU Agencies and by relevant international bodies, with an increased importance of bilateral and regional cooperation between states, making use of all the instruments at hand and particularly the EU Action against Migratory Pressure.

Evaluation of synergy among the South-Eastern European regional mechanisms and turning them into value for a better and comprehensive approach of regional security

The Member States of the Salzburg Forum attached great importance and confidence to the discussions between the participants on the synergy among the Southeast European regional cooperation mechanisms. In this vein, the Romanian Presidency encouraged the Member States to continue monitoring the implementation process of the relevant legal framework in the home affairs field and assessing potential overlaps in order to set up precise guidelines for the

enforcement of the regional mechanisms provisions in a more effective and efficient manner, for a better and comprehensive approach of the regional security.

As an example, the activities carried out within the framework of the ILECU project contribute, together with other regional initiatives, to the Southeast European efforts for combating transnational organized crime.

The Salzburg Forum Member States recognized that it is their duty to increase their own police cooperation capacities in the field of trans-border crime at regional, European and international level in order to get the best value from the entire resources already invested in Southeast European area, in order to avoid overlaps and to create, maintain, monitor and assess the synergy between the regional cooperation mechanisms.

18-month Work Programme

The Ministers evaluated the results of the 18-month work programme of the current trio presidency of Hungary, Poland and Romania. They welcomed the achievements and expressed their determination to further strengthen the cooperation with regard to ongoing activities. The Ministers also initiated discussion on the new 18-month work programme of the upcoming trio presidency of Slovakia, Slovenia and Austria. Among other priorities they mentioned cybersecurity; managing illegal migration; fight against vehicle crime; cooperation regarding rescue systems in border areas; fight against drug trafficking; and cooperation with further regions and third countries.

Slovak Presidency of the Salzburg Forum

The Ministers took note of the priorities of the upcoming Slovak Presidency of the Salzburg Forum and reiterated their full commitment to continue close cooperation on issues of mutual interest under the umbrella of the Salzburg Forum, including the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen area.

The Romanian Presidency of the Salzburg Forum will inform the Lithuanian EU Presidency about the outcome of the Conference.

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