

SALZBURG FORUM MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

29-30 OCTOBER 2009, Bucharest

COMMON CONCLUSIONS

The Ministers from the Republic of Austria, Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Republic of Hungary, Republic of Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Republic of Slovenia, as Member States of the Salzburg Forum, together with Croatia as an observer, met on the occasion of the Ministerial Conference held under the Romanian Presidency on 29-30 October 2009, in Bucharest, and adopted the following Common Conclusions:

I) Deepening the common area of freedom, security and justice in the framework of the Stockholm Programme

1. Member States of Salzburg Forum promote further development of the common area of freedom, security and justice within the EU and wish to play a valuable and proactive role in the process of shaping the Stockholm Programme. The Ministers welcome the works undergoing at the EU level in this respect and are looking forward to the meeting of the Council of Justice and Home Affairs of 30 November - 1 December 2009 when the document will be submitted for substantive discussions, before adoption. They agreed that the programme should be based on the implementation of the Hague Programme; new legislative initiatives should in general be tabled only after a thorough preparation, including prior assessment of the current situation, the problems identified and the need and possibilities of improvement. The Ministers agreed that successful implementation of EU policies also relies on adequate funding and in this respect, it is important that financial programmes supporting the implementation of the JHA policies continue. The Stockholm Programme should give high priority the fight against cross-border widespread crime, the support of regional cooperation initiatives (e.g. the Salzburg Forum) and the enhancement of operational police cooperation. Special attention should also be paid to a more comprehensive migration policy, including the issue of integration.

2. The Ministers consider that the EU immigration and the international protection policies should be developed in accordance with the EU Pact on Immigration and Asylum and the Global Approach to Migration. The EU Pact with its five pillars takes a coherent and balanced approach and should therefore receive top priority. In the field of legal migration, the labour market needs, the principle of community preference, security aspects as well as the countries integration capacities must be fully taken into account. In this regard, the full respect for the fundamental rights of the EU and its Member States constitutes the basis for a good and peaceful living together. The EU should continue to work towards the completion of the Common European Asylum System, which will establish a common basis for decision-making, as the level of harmonisation achieved to date is still insufficient. The Ministers welcome the establishment of the European Asylum Support Office.
3. Special attention should be given to efficient and sustainable return and readmission policies and to the importance of the effective implementation of the EC readmission agreements. Operational and practical cooperation between Member States and with EU institutions is crucial to ensuring a successful return policy. The role of FRONTEX in implementing return measures should be enhanced.
4. The Ministers acknowledge the growing dimensions of the illegal migration flows and cross-border crime networks and the risks attached to these phenomena and consider that the involvement of all stakeholders is essential to efficiently tackle these issues. The EU should seek for an effective and balanced geographical implementation of the Global Approach to Migration, while taking into account the main migration routes to the EU. Cooperation with origin and transit countries should be increased, especially by assisting them in strengthening the institutional capacities and improving control of their external borders. Further on, the Global Approach to Migration should deepen its comprehensiveness through improvement of integration and synergies with other external policies.

II) Enlargement of the Schengen Area

5. In accordance with the European Council Conclusions of 21-22 June 2007, the Ministers consider the up-coming Schengen enlargement a major opportunity for further consolidation of the area of freedom, security and justice within the EU and an improvement of the everyday lives of citizens. The Member States of the Salzburg Forum are closely cooperating with the view to contribute to the success of the Schengen Area enlargement and will support the efforts of Bulgaria and Romania in fulfilling the required standards, in accordance with their foreseen calendar. In relation to the current developments regarding SIS II, the SF Ministers recall the Council Conclusions of 4-5 June 2009 and stress the need to implement them accordingly.

III) Strengthening cooperation at the level of law enforcement agencies

6. The Ministers reaffirm their partnership based on common interest and European values, aiming at meeting their countries citizens' expectations for decisive actions to be taken to preserve their security.
7. Thus, traffic safety represents one of the main concerns of the Member States of the Salzburg Forum. The Ministers discussed the topic of cross border enforcement of penalties for road safety infringements and stressed the importance of efficient bi or multilateral mechanisms in order to increase the road safety in their countries.
8. Abuse against children, especially through Internet child pornography, represents a despicable crime, which calls for common measures to be taken by all Member States of the Salzburg Forum as well as on international level. The Ministers welcome the Salzburg Forum working group on combating child pornography, organized by Romania, and reaffirm the necessity to further develop cooperation within the Salzburg Forum. Furthermore, they welcome the implementation of the concept of "financial coalition" in each Salzburg Forum Member State in order to prevent this phenomenon.

9. Taking into consideration the significant growth of the informatics and communication infrastructure which opened new opportunities for committing criminal acts, the Ministers initiated a Salzburg Forum dialogue on banking frauds by card cloning
10. Recognizing the implications of the current economic crisis for police work and, in particular, an increase of property crime, violent behaviour at demonstrations and major events, the growing propensity for violence as well as a strong increase in white-collar crime, the Ministers discussed the organisation of a workshop. This workshop will serve to identify problem areas, propose solutions and propose concrete measures for intensified operational cooperation and will be organized together by Hungary and Austria.

IV) SECI Center

11. The Ministers reconfirm their commitment to actively support the reform within SECI Centre, which results in a flexible and efficient institution in its relations with Europol and other initiatives.

V) Priorities for further work in 2010

12. The Ministers welcome the priorities of the Presidency of the Slovak Republic in the first semester of 2010, and consider the proposals useful and consistent.
13. The Ministers also welcome the forthcoming evaluation of the Salzburg Forum activities during the Slovenian Presidency in the second half of 2010. This will be followed by a broad discussion on the vision of the future of the Salzburg Forum.

Concluding points

The Ministers paid special attention both to the priorities of the Member States of the Salzburg Forum and to those on the European agenda in the field of home affairs with

the purpose of enhancing the visibility of measures and concrete actions taken in view of promoting common interests.

The Ministers agree on the necessity to further promote key principles and purposes of the Salzburg Forum initiative and to increase visibility of new concrete projects and specific activities.

The Ministers call upon current and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union as well as the European Commission to intensify their joint efforts in order to implement the priorities of the Stockholm Programme.

The Ministers are confident that the results of the Ministerial Conference in Bucharest will contribute to the achievement of the European area of freedom, justice and security, bringing lasting and concrete benefits to the citizens of their countries.

The Romanian Presidency of the Salzburg Forum will inform the Swedish EU Presidency about the results of this Salzburg Forum Ministerial Conference.

Bucharest, 29 October 2009