

Conclusions

Salzburg Forum Ministerial Meeting

Prague, 15-16 May 2008

The Ministers of the Forum Salzburg countries responsible for Home Affairs matters, who convened on May 15 – 16 2008 in Prague, discussed particularly the following issues:

- Future of the European Home Affairs policy, time-schedule of the post-Hague programme as well as issues concerning the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum,
- Justice and Home Affairs External Relations – cooperation with the European Neighbourhood Policy countries and the Western Balkans,
- Cooperation on road safety together with recommendations from the Road Safety Working Group,
- Future of Schengen.

Having thoroughly discussed the above-given issues, the Ministers:

- confirmed that, in the interest of the effectiveness, conclusions of the Future Group should be transformed into the post-Hague programme as soon as possible; they called on the Commission to speed up its work on its Communication and to observe to the original schedule;
- welcomed the Austrian contribution on the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum and agreed on the necessity to harmonize the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum with the post-Hague programme
- agreed on creation of the Salzburg Forum common position to the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum which will be presented at the informal meeting of the JHA Council in July this year;
- reaffirmed the importance of Justice and Home Affairs external dimension, emphasising the European Neighbourhood Policy;
- identified themselves with a proposal to create an Action Oriented Paper (AOP) on the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy;
- are of the opinion that considerations on the future of the Schengen system including the final management of the SIS II must not threaten the SIS II start-up in lines with the current schedule;
- expressed their support for intensification of cooperation between the Salzburg Forum countries on road safety with focus on prevention and consequence management of large-scale traffic accidents;
- took note of the Road Safety Working Group conclusions and recommendations and agreed on the necessity to proceed further with its work;
- welcomed the discussion on the future of the Schengen system in particular on the schedule for the SIS II development and finalisation as well as on police cooperation;
- Salzburg Forum countries reiterated their commitment to support Bulgaria and Romania in their preparation for the integration into the Schengen area.

Participants of the meeting welcomed presentation of priorities for the EU Council Presidency of the Czech Republic in the area of Home Affairs. They welcomed information of the Hungarian delegation on the programme of the upcoming Presidency of Hungary in the Salzburg Forum.

At the close of the meeting all participants reaffirmed their determination to take part in creating the area of justice, freedom and security and to this end expressed their common will to discuss further issues necessary for the future development of cooperation in the Home Affairs area on the Salzburg Forum platform.

Prague, 16 May 2008