

Communiqué from the Minister of the Interior

27/07/05

Group flight to Afghanistan

40 Afghans with irregular status, 25 from France who had entered with the help of smugglers and 15 from Great Britain, have been removed to their country on board a group flight co-organised by the French and British authorities. Reception and assistance in Afghanistan will be provided by the International Organisation for Migration (I.O.M.).

On 27 July 2005, 40 Afghans with irregular status, 25 in France and 15 in Great-Britain, have been returned to their country.

They were accompanied during the flight by a doctor from the national police, a diplomat from the ministry of Foreign Affairs, an official from the border police as well as police officers from Britain and France.

This group flight follows a decision taken by interior ministers of the G5, at the beginning of July 2005 at Evian, to combine their resources in the fight against clandestine migration. It is evidence of excellent franco-british cooperation.

The departure was preceded as usual before each removal by a study of the situation, both through the Afghan embassy in Paris as well as the French embassy in Kabul, which concluded that these persons had no cause for concern on arrival in their country. An additional guarantee was provided by the presence on their arrival in Kabul of representatives of the French embassy and the International Organisation for Migration (I.O.M.) who will monitor the conditions of return and have promised their assistance.

These removals of foreigners in an irregular situation on our territory without permission or entitlement is a simple application of French law conforming to a tripartite agreement of the 28 september 2002 signed by Nicolas SARKOZY with the Afghan government and the High Commission for Refugees (H.C.R.). This procedure is a common practice in a number of European country.

The application of decisions taken as a result of legal and administrative procedures is also a message addressed to potential irregular migrants and to smugglers and certain employers who exploit them without shame.