

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSION

Work on the creation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) started immediately after the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam in May 1999, on the basis of the orientations given by the Tampere European Council. During the first phase of the CEAS (1999-2005), the goal was to harmonise Member States' legal frameworks on the basis of common minimum standards.

The Hague Programme set as the aims of the CEAS in its second phase the establishment of a common asylum procedure and a uniform status for those who are granted asylum or subsidiary protection, as well as strengthening practical cooperation between national asylum administrations and the external dimension of asylum.

The Commission considered that, before proposing any new initiative, an in-depth reflection and debate with all the relevant stakeholders on the future architecture of the CEAS was also necessary. It therefore presented a Green Paper in June 2007, which aimed to identify possible options for shaping the second phase of the CEAS. The issues raised and the suggestions put forward during the consultation have provided the basis for the preparation of this Policy Plan.

Building on the existing and future legal framework, this Policy Plan defines a road-map for the coming years and lists the measures that the Commission intends to propose in order to complete the second phase of the CEAS.

The provisions of the Geneva Convention, the evolving jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the full respect of the Charter of Fundamental Rights will be a constant reference for this strategy.

The Commission is requested to adopt the attached draft Policy Plan and to transmit it to the Council and to the European Parliament.