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**NOTE**

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From: Austrian delegation  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Joint Declaration on Managing Migration Flows - Police Chiefs Meeting in Vienna on 30 June 2016

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Delegations will find attached the Joint Declaration on managing migrations flows adopted at the above meeting.

**JOINT DECLARATION  
ON MANAGING MIGRATION FLOWS**

On the occasion of the Police Chiefs Meeting on 30 June 2016 in Vienna, the Police Chiefs of the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Hellenic Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as “the Police Chiefs”),

- *concerned* about the significant increase in the number of illegal migrants reaching Europe in the year 2015,
- *taking into consideration* the high number of asylum applications that some countries are facing,
- *stating* the need for strengthening their joint cooperation in order to tackle illegal migration more effectively,
- *referring to* the European Council Conclusions on migration of 18 February, 17-18 March and 28 June 2016 inter alia on the full application of the Schengen Borders Code and the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement, as well as the need to remain vigilant as regards new routes of irregular migrants,
- *recalling* the Council Conclusions on the future of the return policy of 8 October 2015 in which the Council strongly encouraged Member States to make better use of the expertise, and request, more systematically, the services currently being offered by FRONTEX, such as deployment of screening teams in its coordinated joint operations, assisting in acquisition of travel documents of migrants, organising joint return operations and training of national staff involved in return operations, and furthermore urged the Member States and FRONTEX to cooperate closely in order to play a particularly active role in the establishment and functioning of the *hotspots* with regard to return operations,

- *referring to the Vienna Declaration “Managing Migration Together” of 24 February 2016, in which the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Ministers of Interior of the participating countries decided that the migration flow along the Western Balkans route needs to be substantially reduced and therefore agreed to support effective border management, and additionally reaffirmed that migrants not in need of international protection must be swiftly returned in full respect of their dignity and human rights. Using technical assistance by FRONTEX and EASO to this end would be highly welcomed,*
  
- *recalling the Dubrovnik Joint Declaration of the Salzburg Forum Ministerial Conference of 14 June 2016, in which the Ministers agreed that cooperation with third countries (countries of origin and transit for illegal migration) in the field of migration should be enhanced and that, regarding the efficient fight against human smuggling and human trafficking in connection with migration flows, a proactive exchange of information on criminal networks is essential,*

*Have reached the following understanding in order to ensure the effective implementation of the relevant political guidelines:*

1. The Police Chiefs share the opinion that the existing measures at the EU external borders on the Central and Eastern Mediterranean route, such as the EU-Turkey Statement, the EU Hotspot approach as well as cooperation in the framework of FRONTEX, EUROPOL and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), need to be effectively implemented including the deployment of staff and technical resources.
  
2. However, a number of migrants stranded along the Western Balkans route is trying to reach Western and Central Europe. Joint measures of cooperation among the countries of the Western Balkans route as well as those coordinated by FRONTEX have proven to be successful and should be continued with the support of the Police Chiefs. Taking into account the FRONTEX reinforced joint operations and actions of preparedness the Police Chiefs stress the need to remain vigilant about potential developments regarding other

routes and are ready to take the necessary measures in order to prevent a similar situation as in 2015.

3. The Police Chiefs agree that the deployment of foreign police officers along borders which are strongly affected by irregular migration conveys a strong message that the countries concerned are resolute in jointly coping with the migration crisis.
4. The Police Chiefs agree that effective measures against secondary migration require strict border checks and surveillance at all border sections involved, as well as a coordinated approach and close cooperation regarding the refusal of entry and readmission. While those under strong pressure need the support of the others, they also need to fully assume their own responsibilities in correctly and extensively implementing all necessary measures to ensure a high level of control at external borders. The Police Chiefs stress the importance of the implementation of readmission agreements due to its critical importance for the effective prevention of illegal migration.
5. As migration routes may change quickly, and the pressure on the region as a whole is very high, and as a common policy of readmission and refusal of entry is needed, the Police Chiefs agree to increase coordination of actions and adjustment of measures according to the developments. The Police Chiefs stress the need for a regular mutual exchange of information, including with FRONTEX and Europol, on current migration flows affecting their countries and related national measures.
6. With regard to the efficient fight against human smuggling and human trafficking in connection with migration flows, the Police Chiefs agree that, for the crucial proactive exchange of information on criminal networks, the capacities of Europol and FRONTEX, the recently established Joint Operational Office (JOO) in Vienna as well as other tools at the EU and regional level should be used to their full extent within the existing legal framework.
7. The Police Chiefs share the opinion that, in order to support effective border controls the deployment of police officers to the particularly affected borders of the region, e.g. through joint patrols, common action and monitoring at authorized border crossing

points, should be implemented primarily in the framework of FRONTEX or alternatively in the framework of existing bilateral and multilateral agreements.

8. The Police Chiefs seek the support of FRONTEX for this initiative. Within the scope of its possibilities, the Agency is asked to provide support by monitoring the situation and the consequences of the foreseen measures, by reporting the results and by issuing recommendations.
9. Furthermore, the Police Chiefs would welcome FRONTEX to continue its efforts in sensitising other relevant EU member countries via its channels and to mobilise these countries to actively participate in their common endeavour to tackle irregular migration more effectively.

Done at Vienna, 30 June 2016.