

Brussels, 22 March 2017
(OR. en)

7486/17

LIMITE

JAI 265
ASIM 31

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 14 March 2017
To: Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum
Subject: Summary of discussions

1. **Adoption of the agenda**
2. **Reform of the Common European Asylum System: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted and amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents**
 - **Orientation debate on terms of validity of residence permits****Doc. 6926/17 ASILE 10 CODEC 310**

The Committee held a thorough debate on the validity period of residence permits, in the proposal for a Qualification Regulation, on the basis of the two options presented by the Presidency. Following that debate, the Presidency concluded there was a clear majority in favour of option 1. The Presidency will take into account the result of the discussions and the positions expressed by different delegations, in particular those favouring some additional flexibility, in order to steer the examination of the Qualification Regulation proposal accordingly.

3. Return Policy¹

- **Commission Recommendation on making returns more effective when implementing the Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council**
- **Commission Communication on a more effective return policy in the European Union - A renewed Action Plan**
- = **Presentation by the Commission and exchange of views**

The Committee welcomed the Commission Communication and Recommendation on return and had a first exchange of views on the actions proposed. Both the revised EU Action Plan and the Commission's Recommendation were generally well received by Member States, with many delegations stressing that the recommendations had already been implemented to a large degree by Member States or stating their willingness to look into them positively. Several delegations commented, in particular, the Commission recommendation regarding the possible extended use of detention in order to avoid absconding.

Frontex provided an overview of the list of return-related services it may offer to Member States: pre-return network, identification missions, SOPs, joint return operations, mapping of Member States' needs, Frontex component of the Commission's IRMA tool, etc.

Several delegations emphasised the lack of cooperation by third countries as being the main obstacle to increasing the return rates. Some delegations also expressed some discontent as to the success of the Partnership Framework.

The Chair recalled that a policy debate on the return policy, based on the above Commission Communication and Recommendation, will be held at the next meeting of the JHA Council on 27 March.

¹ Exceptionally in the presence of the Schengen Associated Countries.

4. Any other business

- **Valetta Senior Officials Meeting**
- **Malta Declaration - Implementation Plan**
- = **Information by the Presidency**

The Presidency updated delegations on the outcome of the Valetta Senior Officials meeting (Malta, 8-9 February) and on the most recent developments concerning the Malta Declaration of 3 February and its Implementation Plan.
