



**Joint Statement by Dutch Minister for Migration Klaas Dijkhoff and European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos**

Brussels, 23 February 2016

**Joint Statement by Dutch Minister for Migration Klaas Dijkhoff and European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos**

Following the European Council and ahead of the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 25 February, we wish to express our joint determination to pursue a European approach to the refugee crisis.

We understand the pressure the different countries concerned are facing. We are concerned about the developments along the Balkan route and the humanitarian crisis that might unfold in certain countries especially in Greece.

The Dutch Presidency of the Council and the Commission are therefore in constant contact with all relevant actors and countries along the Western Balkans and are closely following the developments in the region and on the ground at the border crossings. However, all countries involved have a responsibility and obligation to respect the European rules and put an end to the 'wave through' approach. While doing so, Governments should take into account the effects in neighbouring countries.

We call on all countries and actors along the route to prepare the necessary contingency planning to be able to address humanitarian needs, including reception capacities. In parallel, the Commission is coordinating a contingency planning effort, to offer support in case of a humanitarian crisis both outside and within the EU, as well as to further coordinate border management.

All Member States should act in a joint spirit of solidarity and responsibility, especially in times when unity and common solutions are needed. The Commission and the Presidency are working hard on this, and the EU as a whole stands ready to assist.

STATEMENT/16/395

Press contacts:

[Natasha BERTAUD](#) (+32 2 296 74 56)

[Tove ERNST](#) (+32 2 298 67 64)

[Tim McPHIE](#) (+ 32 2 295 86 02)

[Markus LAMMERT](#) (+ 32 2 298 04 23)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)