

12711/04

LIMITE

ASILE 51

TRANSLATION PROVIDED BY PRESIDENCY

NOTE

from : Presidency

Subject : Improved access to durable solutions

Objective

Refugees should have access to protection and durable solutions as quickly as possible and as close as possible to their homes. The EU acknowledges the importance of contributing also outside the EU to a more effective international protection system.

Measures

The EU will pursue this objective by the following means.

1. The EU aims to increase capacity to protect refugees in regions of origin by developing EU regional protection programmes. Measures to improve this capacity should be developed in close cooperation with JHA authorities and be firmly anchored in EU external policy. The programmes are to be developed by the Commission and Member States in collaboration with third countries and in close consultation with the UNHCR. Based on the principle of responsibility sharing, they will represent a multiannual commitment and will be flexible. Indicators and objectives for these programmes will be worked out on the basis of the Commission Communication of June 2004.

2. The Commission should be requested to produce an action plan before June 2005 for one or more EU pilot regional protection programmes to be launched in December 2005. The pilot programme or programmes will incorporate a variety of relevant instruments and should be developed in collaboration with the third country for which they are intended and in consultation with the UNHCR. They should be funded by, among others, AENEAS and co-financed by interested Member States. They could also benefit from the experience gained with current or future UNHCR projects in Africa financed by the Commission and several Member States.
3. The Commission should be invited to submit to the Council a proposal for a non-binding EU resettlement scheme by no later than July 2005.

PROPOSITIONS

1. The EU will actively take measures to improve protection capacity and durable solutions in regions of origin.
2. EU regional protection programmes, initially in the form of one or more EU pilot programmes, will be developed.
3. A flexible, non-binding settlement programme will be developed for more orderly entry of persons in need of protection to the EU (complementary to existing national asylum procedures).
