



Progress following Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting: Tenth Contact Points Video Conference

Brussels, 30 December 2015

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Leaders' Statement Point 13 on border management:

A broad discussion on the different border protection points allowed for an exchange of information between the countries and organisations on the call, including the following key points:

- Frontex informed the group of the launch on 28 December of the new operation "Poseidon Rapid Intervention" with the deployment of 293 officers and 15 vessels to the Greek islands. An additional 200 officers are expected to be deployed by mid-January. Over 100 of the officers currently deployed are supporting with registration and identification.
- Participants discussed the need to improve and accelerate return and readmission procedures.
- The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia provided updates on the strengthening of the management of the external land border and the deployment of border guards from other States at the border with Greece.

Leaders' Statement Points 5 and 6 relating to support and shelter to refugees:

UNHCR provided an update on the progress of the delivery of the 20,000 reception places which will be provided via voucher scheme with selected implementing partners in Greece as part of the 50,000 additional reception places to be provided. 1000 places should be made available by end 2015 and an additional 3000 by mid-January 2016.

Leaders' Statement Point 9 relating to ongoing information exchange:

Participants discussed the need to step up the exchange of information on cross-border movements.

Leaders' Statement Point 15 on tackling smuggling and trafficking:

Participants discussed the need to step up the fight against criminal networks and address the issue of forged documents. Cooperation with Europol should be increased in this regards.

The group will reconvene again on 6 January for the next weekly video conference, and will continue their bilateral contacts in the meantime to ensure full communication, coordination and cooperation to address the migration flows and to ensure humane treatment of those seeking asylum in Europe.

Background

On Wednesday 21 October, European Commission President Juncker called for a Leaders' Meeting on refugee flows along the Western Balkans route to address the emergency situation unfolding along this route.

At the meeting, all 12 leaders – including the President of the Commission – agreed to nominate contact points within 24 hours to allow daily exchanges and coordination to achieve the gradual, controlled and orderly movement of persons along the Western Balkans route and to monitor the implementation of the 17-point plan agreed on 21 October.

Attending the Leaders' Meeting were the Heads of State or Government of Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. The President of the European Parliament and the President of the European Council, the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU, the future Dutch Presidency of the Council of the EU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were in attendance. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) were also represented.

On 15 December, the European Commission published a [Progress Report](#) on measures taken to tackle the refugee and migration crisis along the Western Balkans Route. The Report assessed progress on the measures in the [Leaders Statement](#) adopted after the [Western Balkans Route Leaders Meeting](#) on the 25 October.

For more information

[Web Page on the Leaders' Meeting on the Western Balkans Route](#)

[Leaders' Statement](#)

[Press Release on First Progress after the Leaders' Meeting](#)

[Press release on first contact points video conference](#)

[Report on the follow-up to the Leaders' Meeting on refugee flows along the Western Balkans Route](#)

[All press materials on the EU Migration Agenda](#)

Annex: National Contact Points – Western Balkans Route

Country / Organisation	National Contact	Function
COMMISSION	Mr. Richard SZOSTAK	Diplomatic Adviser, Cabinet of the President
PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL	Mr Pascal SCHUMACHER	Adviser, Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the EU
FUTURE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL	Mr. Alexander SOREL	Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU
EUROPEAN COUNCIL	Mr. Hugo BRADY	Adviser, Cabinet of the President
ALBANIA	Mr. Sander LLESHI	Adviser for security in the Cabinet of Prime Minister
AUSTRIA	Mr. Raphael STERNFELD	International Affairs Adviser, Federal Chancellery
BULGARIA	Ms. Petya PARVANOVA	Adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior
GERMANY	Mr. Uwe CORSEPIUS	European Policy Adviser, Federal Chancellery
Former YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	Ms. Anastasija ILIESKA	State Secretary, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia
GREECE	Ms. Eleni TAKOU	Chief policy Adviser of the Minister of Migration
CROATIA	Ms. Maja BOGDAN	Deputy Sherpa, Government of the Republic of Croatia
HUNGARY	Mr. Tibor LAKATOS	Police Colonel, Head of the Operation Centre of the Ministry of Interior
ROMANIA	Mr. Leonard ORBAN	EU Affairs Sherpa of the President
SERBIA	Mr. Aleksandar VULIN	Minister of Social Affairs, Government coordinator for Migration Issues
SLOVENIA	Mr. Igor MALLY	EU Affairs Sherpa, Government of the Republic of Slovenia
UNHCR	Ms. Sophie MAGENNIS	Head of Policy and Support Unit
FRONTEX	Mr. David REISENZEIN	Liaison Officer
EASO	Mr. Mark CAMILLERI	Adviser to the Executive Director

Press contacts:

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

[Jakub ADAMOWICZ](#) (+32 2 29 50595)

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