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NOTE

from: Luxembourg delegation

to : K.4 Committee

Subject: **Provisional work programme for Steering Group I (Asylum and Immigration) for the period from 1 July 1997 to 31 December 1997**

Steering Group I

1. Presidency programme:

Steering Group I will examine the proposed work programme for the second half of 1997.

2. Treaty of Amsterdam:

Steering Group I will have an exchange of views on the implications of the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference as regards work on asylum, immigration, visas and external frontiers.

3. Preparation for entry into force of the Dublin Convention.

Asylum

1. Dublin Convention:

Since all the signatory Member States have now ratified the Convention, the Presidency will give priority to the work necessary to prepare for its entry into force.

A first draft of decisions to be adopted by the Committee provided for in Article 18 will be presented, based on the implementing measures in CIREA 3 REV 1, the Council conclusions concerning practical implementation of the Dublin Convention and the rules of procedure of the Article 18 Committee approved by the Council on 27 May 1997.

A proposal on setting up a working party to monitor the practical implementation of the Dublin Convention and an appropriate framework for the structured exchange of statistical information relating to it will be drafted with a view to adoption by the Article 18 Committee.

In order to assist the practical implementation of the Convention, the Presidency proposes to draw up a manual on the Convention and its implementing measures.

Discussions on the draft Convention parallel to the Dublin Convention inter alia with Iceland and Norway will continue in the light of the outcome of the IGC.

2. Temporary protection:

The Presidency intends to continue examining the Commission proposal with a view to joint action concerning the temporary protection of displaced persons. As under the Netherlands Presidency, experts from the Migration Working Party will be invited to take part in these discussions.

3. Reception conditions for asylum applicants:

The Working Party will assess the conclusions of the European Conference on the Reception of Asylum applicants held in The HAGUE on 19 and 20 June 1997.

4. Relations with third countries:

To ensure the continuation of the structured dialogue with the CCEE conducted under the Netherlands Presidency, the Presidency will organize a seminar on current practices in the European Union regarding asylum procedures and more particularly the minimum guarantees which they should provide.

5. Monitoring of the transposition of instruments on asylum:

In accordance with the Council Decision of 27 May 1997, the Presidency will prepare an initial report on the basis of Member States' replies.

6. Concept of safe third countries:

Drafting of a proposal agreed between the Member States on the draft recommendation setting out the guidelines on implementation of the concept of safe third countries drafted by the CAHAR.

EURODAC

1. The Luxembourg Presidency will continue the efforts made by the Netherlands Presidency to ensure that the JHA Council will be able to reach agreement on the EURODAC Convention (Convention concerning the establishment of EURODAC for the collection, storage, exchange and comparison of fingerprints of applicants for asylum).
2. From the technological viewpoint, i.e. the design and construction of the information system, the Presidency will monitor the second phase of the implementation study for the system, jointly with the Member States of the Troika. This phase will consist of the production by Bossard Consultants of an additional study on the technical and financial aspects of the EURODAC system. After the production of this additional study towards October 1997, it will be for the Presidency to propose to the Council a draft specification, so that the contract can be allocated under the United Kingdom Presidency in the first half of 1998.

CIREA

1. The situation in various countries of origin will be further examined on the basis of the standard questionnaire, in particular concerning Turkey and Nigeria.
2. Procedures will be laid down for the collection, processing and analysis of statistics on the basis of the note from the Netherlands delegation (ASIM 73 REV 2).
3. Examination of the desirability of and, if appropriate, procedures for a data bank will be completed.
4. Discussions on the confidentiality of documents will be continued.

Migration

- Admission

1. Long-term residents:

The Luxembourg Presidency intends to make an assessment of the implementation in the Member States of the Council Resolution of 4 March 1996 on the status of third-country nationals residing on a long-term basis in the territory of the Member States.

If it emerges from this exercise that there is a willingness for and a possibility of further harmonizing national laws and practices, the Presidency will submit additional proposals.

These discussions are likely to be affected by the draft convention on the conditions of admission of third country nationals which the Commission will be submitting shortly.

2. Subsidiary protection:

The Presidency will continue the discussions begun on this point on the basis of the discussion paper prepared by the Danish delegation. Experts on asylum will be associated with this work.

3. Measures against marriages of convenience:

The Presidency intends to submit a text on the further harmonization of Member States measures to combat the phenomenon of marriages of convenience

4. Exchange of information on asylum and immigration:

The Presidency intends to continue the discussion on improving the arrangements for the exchange and analysis of information in the clearing-houses, and to ensure that the principles worked out under the Irish and Netherlands Presidencies are followed up and implemented.

- Expulsion

1. Inter-pillar examination of readmission problems with certain countries:

The Presidency will continue the initiative begun under the Netherlands Presidency to examine the problem of readmission in the framework of a joint meeting with experts from groups falling under the three pillars of the TEU.

- The exercise will be continued for other third countries presenting readmission problems.
- The follow-up to the cross-pillar meeting of 9 April 1997 on China, Vietnam and India will take place at the level of third pillar experts.

2. Assistance for voluntary return:

After a period of six months following publication in the Official Journal of the joint action on the exchange of information concerning assistance for the voluntary return of third-country nationals, an initial report on Member States' experience in this matter should be drafted.

3. Collective expulsion by charters:

The Presidency intends to examine the idea of organizing at Union level collective expulsions by charters and laying down the practical arrangements for such an initiative.

External frontiers

The Presidency intends to resume discussions on the Convention on this subject in the light of the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Visas

1. Uniform format for residence permits:

The Presidency will finalize work on preparing the technical arrangements for the uniform format for residence permits.

2. Regulation No 2317/95 on European Union policy on visas:

The CJEC has annulled the Council Regulation of 25 September 1995 and asked the Council to adopt a new Regulation within a reasonable period.

The Presidency therefore intends to resume discussions on this point.

3. Airport transit visas:

The Presidency will ensure that the questionnaire prepared is followed up.

False documents

1. The Presidency will continue work on devising a European system for the storage and transmission of images to be compatible with national systems.
2. Work on drafting the manual of authentic documents, including financing arrangements, will be continued with the aim of completing it.
3. Work on publication of the Fraud Bulletin will be continued with particular attention to exchanges of information on false or falsified documents.

CIREFI

1. The exchange and analysis of statistics will be continued during the second half of 1997 on the basis of the results of the discussions on the exchange of information.
2. Cirefi will evaluate Member States' experiences with use of the EU laissez-passer.
3. Improvement of statistics on illegal immigration and false documents:

Cirefi will examine the results of the proceedings of the informal group of experts which is drawing up a proposal to create a new working method for the collection, processing and analysis of these statistics.

4. Relations with third countries:

The CCEE, the United States and Canada will be invited to take part in a practical seminar on the question of immigration networks for prostitution purposes.