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from the Presidency

**Meeting of CIREA experts with asylum experts from
the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Cyprus**

(Brussels, 20 November 1998)

On 10 June 1998, a meeting took place under the United Kingdom Presidency between CIREA experts and experts on asylum questions from the CCEE. A preliminary exchange of views was conducted on the possible future organisation of cooperation between the Member States of the European Union and the Central and East European countries and Cyprus (CCEE).

With reference to this meeting, the Presidency takes this opportunity to put forward for discussion some proposals regarding cooperation between CIREA experts and asylum experts from the CCEE.

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1. Organization of joint meetings between CIREA experts and asylum experts from the CCEE.

To increase the flow of information from and to the CCEE, joint meetings between CIREA experts and asylum experts from the CCEE should be held on a regular basis. In an endeavour to ensure that the exchange of information on questions of asylum practice is as efficient as possible, specific source countries of common interest should be discussed on each occasion. These meetings could be prepared in future on the basis of an appropriate questionnaire to be sent both to Member States and to the CCEE.

2. Exchange of information outside the joint meetings

In principle, steps should be taken to ensure that there is also a systematic mutual exchange of information on a voluntary basis outside the joint meetings, covering for example the following areas:

- legislation and legal provisions on asylum
- important case law
- information on the situation in source States
- other current developments and trends in the asylum sector.

There could be an ad-hoc exchange of information on these areas, i.e. whenever it comes in or on the occasion of a joint meeting within the framework of the CIREA Working Party, via the General Secretariat. In addition, consideration could be given to preparing a form on the abovementioned areas, to be filled in and sent at regular intervals.

3. Information on source countries

The voluntary, mutual exchange of information on source countries within the framework of CIREA could also be an aim. Regarding the question of the confidentiality of such information, the general principle whereby the State or body delivering the information decides whether the information is for public consumption or confidential would apply. With reference to the communication of CIREA information, the criteria governing the confidentiality of CIREA documents as described in CIREA 41-7919/98 would also have to be observed.

