

CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS
ON THE PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION
HELD IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BUDAPEST PROCESS
IN PRAGUE ON 14-15 OCTOBER 1997

RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting in Prague on 14-15 October 1997 at the invitation of the Government of the Czech Republic, Ministers of the Governments of Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldavia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, or their representatives; and representatives of the following international organizations: Central European Initiative, Council of Europe, European Union, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, Intergovernmental Consultations, International Organization for Migration, Interpol, United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

Referring to the final documents of the previous conferences of Ministers responsible for matters relating to illegal migration, held in Berlin on 30-31 October 1991 and in Budapest on 15-16 February 1993;

Referring also to the activities undertaken by other fora in recent years with a view to counteracting illegal migration and trafficking in aliens, and its linkages to organized crime, notably by the relevant bodies of the United Nations, by Interpol, as well as at the regional level;

Underlining that illegal migration and trafficking in aliens constitute a threat to public security and would require concerted action by all States concerned in a spirit of international solidarity and genuine mutual interest, as co-operation on matters relating to internal security reinforces stability at the regional level;

Recognizing that one of the causes of illegal migration is the difference in living standards between regions and that the prevention of illegal migration also presupposes sustainable development in the countries of origin;

Emphasizing the necessity to respect human rights, and underlining the obligations arising from the European Convention on Human Rights, the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees and the New York Protocol, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Appreciating the activities of the Budapest Group of Senior Officials, which was established to pursue the implementation of the recommendations of the Budapest Ministerial Conference;

Also appreciating the statement made by the Minister of Interior of Hungary, as well as the reports issued by the Budapest Group, on progress achieved with regard the implementation of the recommendations adopted at the previous conferences of Ministers in Berlin and Budapest;

Being aware, however, that further measures should be undertaken in this regard and that problems relating to illegal migration and trafficking, and their connection to international organized crime, have changed in character and aggravated;

Recalling that significant institutional developments have occurred since the holding of the last Ministerial conference, notably with regard to the expansion of the membership of the European Union and the Schengen Group, and that ten of the Central and Eastern European States have concluded association agreements with the European Union;

Noting with satisfaction that the European Union has reinforced action to combat illegal migration and trafficking in aliens and other forms of organized crime and is raising these issues in the context of the Structured Dialogue with Associated States, of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership process, in the framework of the Trans-Atlantic Dialogue, and is planning to do so with the Newly Independent States;

Recognizing that, at the European level, any efforts to counteract illegal migration and trafficking in aliens would have to take into account the relevant activities and co-operation structures of the European Union;

Taking into account recent multilateral action with regard to trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation, notably:

The Conference on trafficking in women for sexual exploitation held in Vienna 10-11 June 1996 and the Communication of the European Commission on the same subject of 20 November 1996;

The Declaration and Agenda of the World Congress against commercial and sexual exploitation of children, adopted in Stockholm on 27-31 August 1996;

The Declaration on European guidelines for effective measures to prevent and combat trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation, adopted at the Hague Ministerial Conference on 26 April 1997;

The Joint Action of 21 January 1997 concerning action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children adopted by the Council of Ministers of the European Union;

Being convinced that consistent strategies are needed to achieve a harmonized approach among all European countries on entry policies, to ensure orderly migration and to ultimately facilitate the freedom to travel throughout Europe;

Being aware that the implementation of relevant measures requires adequate assistance to many States in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as among the Newly Independent States, in terms of legislative development, technical assistance, training and equipment;

Noting that the Budapest Group, in its follow-up of the previous conference of Ministers, has identified the following seven areas as being of major significance in terms of harmonizing and reinforcing relevant policies and measures: (i) harmonization of legislation to combat trafficking in aliens; (ii) pre-entry and entry control, in particular the approximation of visa regimes; (iii) return to the country of origin and readmission agreements; (iv) information exchange on illegal migration; (v) technical and financial assistance to Central and Eastern European States; (vi) linkage between

trafficking in aliens and other forms of organized crime and (vii) future co-operation between participating States in the context of the Budapest process;

Taking note of the various proposals on further measures in these areas elaborated by the Budapest Group and having thoroughly assessed them;

Emphasizing the need of a collective goal-oriented effort to achieve results in terms of introducing necessary legislation and measures in the coming years;

Being aware that relevant measures should be implemented according to the constitutional provisions and the basic principles of the legal system of each State;

Have adopted the following recommendations:

Harmonization of legislation to combat trafficking in aliens

Suggesting that the objectives set by the previous conference of Ministers with regard to legal harmonization should be further promoted by the formulation of recommendations which would in precise terms outline a common legal framework for combating trafficking in aliens;

Recognizing that trafficking in persons for the purpose of economic or sexual exploitation is often characterized by the use of coercion, in particular violence and threats, or deceit, and that special consideration should be given to these circumstances when harmonizing legislation;

(a) The need for a common understanding of the term "trafficking in aliens"

Underlining that an efficient and harmonized effort against in particular the organized and/or professional trafficking in aliens requires a common understanding of the term "trafficking in aliens";

Noting that activities constituting trafficking in aliens i.a. include the following: abuse of legal migration facilities, facilitating illegal border crossing, illegal entry and/or stay, unauthorized transit, production, provision and use of fraudulent documents, abuse of genuine documents, providing advice and/or means to make fraudulent claims before authorities, arranging transportation, harbouring facilities and illegal employment;

1. Recommend that a common understanding of the term "trafficking in aliens" should include activities intended deliberately to facilitate the border crossing or residence of an alien in the territory of the State, contrary to the rules and conditions applicable in such a State;

(b) The need for criminalizing trafficking in aliens and for applying effective sanctions to trafficking in aliens and related activities

Recognizing that trafficking in aliens has harmful social and economic consequences and often leads to exploitation of persons and therefore should be considered a serious offence in all participating States;

Appreciating the fact that most participating States have criminalized activities constituting trafficking in aliens;

Noting that trafficking in aliens often involves several persons operating simultaneously in the territories of several states and recognizing that trafficking in aliens can only be effectively prosecuted if the legal framework is designed to cope with the international character of the trafficking process;

Underlining the need to distinguish between the persons (legal as well as natural persons) involved in different parts of the trafficking process with regard to the types and levels of punishment;

Noting that the levels and types of punishment vary considerably between participating States and that present sanctions in general are neither suitable or severe enough to have a preventive effect on the trafficking activity, nor are comparable with the sanctions imposed on other forms of organized crime;

Suggesting that i.a. the following factors and circumstances should be considered to be aggravating: performing trafficking for financial gain and/or in an organized manner, forgery of documents, extortion (violence, threats, abuse of authority), exploitation through prostitution or other forms of economic and sexual constraint, pressing the illegal migrants into illegal activities (illegal employment, drug trafficking, clandestine workshops, car thefts etc.) and money laundering;

Noting that trafficked persons often are in a particularly vulnerable situation, giving rise to humanitarian considerations, and that, consequently, a distinction should be made between the trafficker and the trafficked person with regard to the principles, types and levels of punishment;

Recognizing that the effective return of a trafficked person may have a deterrent effect towards potential illegal migrants but also that in some cases a State may decide not to return immediately if such a person provides information which could be useful in the fight against traffickers;

Being aware that sanctions on employers illegally hiring migrants have been introduced in Central and Eastern European States only in recent years;

2. Recommend that participating States, which have not yet done so, adopt national legislation which makes it a criminal offence to traffic or to attempt to traffic aliens, and that this should include the instigation and the aiding and abetting of the offence; special consideration should be given to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation;

3. Recommend that participating States examine the possibility of extending the scope of their national legislation on trafficking in aliens so as to make it punishable for their nationals and other persons staying within their territory to facilitate the illegal entry into any state;

4. Recommend that legal and administrative measures in particular be focused on sanctioning organized trafficking in aliens;

5. Recommend that trafficking shall be punishable with effective, proportionate and deterrent penalties which may include imprisonment with a maximum of at least 2 years (under aggravating circumstances 3 years) and that the importance of parallel imposition of fines is recognized;

6. Recommend that it should be possible to confiscate proceeds obtained as a result of trafficking in aliens as well as means of transport such as motor vehicles, ships and aircrafts owned by the traffickers or their accomplices and which are used for trafficking in aliens;

7. Recommend to examine the possibility of imposing appropriate sanctions, in accordance with administrative regulations or criminal law, including the closing of establishments or the suspending of economic activities which continuously provide the basis for committing offences relating to trafficking in aliens;

8. Recommend that illegal border crossing shall in general be dealt with by effective, proportionate and deterrent sanctions which may include fines, and under aggravating circumstances short term imprisonment, taking into account, however, article 31 of the Geneva Convention; and that migrants having entered illegally, lacking grounds for legal stay, should be returned unless there are obstacles hereto based on serious humanitarian considerations or international law;

9. Recommend that measures be taken to ensure appropriate protection for persons trafficked, e.g. for the purpose of sexual exploitation, who provide information concerning the trafficking, and who are available when required by the criminal justice system to give evidence, which may entail the provisional granting of a temporary permit to stay, in appropriate cases; and to ensure necessary discretion for aliens trafficked for sexual exploitation;

10. Recommend that sanctions be introduced, which would punish the production, provision and use of fraudulent documents by effective, proportionate and deterrent penalties which may include imprisonment with a maximum of at least 3 years, fining and confiscation of such documents and the proceeds obtained through these activities;

11. Recommend that employment of illegal migrants shall be dealt with by effective, proportionate and deterrent sanctions which may include imprisonment with a maximum of at least 6 months, fines and confiscation of proceeds obtained as a consequence of the illegal employment;

(c) The need for accession to and implementation of relevant international instruments

Deploring that many participating States have not yet acceded to the relevant international instruments and that acceded instruments are not fully and properly implemented in some States;

12. Recommend that participating States, which have not yet done so, accede to and implement the following relevant international instruments:

(i) Instruments safeguarding human rights and the rights of refugees

**The 1950 European Convention on Human rights and its eleven additional Protocols;
The 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 New York Protocol;
The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women;
The 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child;**

(ii) Instruments improving and facilitating international cooperation

**The 1957 European Convention on Extradition and its additional Protocol of 1978;
The 1959 European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and its 1978 Protocol;**

The 1981 European Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data;
The 1990 Convention on Money Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime;

Pre-entry and entry control, in particular the approximation of visa regimes

Emphasizing that the approximation of entry policies and procedures between European States is a prerequisite for the establishment of freedom to travel;

Recalling that the European Union is implementing the objective of free movement of persons within the Union, to the extent set out in the Draft Treaty of Amsterdam, and noting that the Union is currently harmonizing visa provisions of Member States as well as other components relating to pre-entry and entry policies;

Welcoming the measures taken by the European Union in transmitting to interested States, in May 1997, a guide for effective practices for controls of persons at external frontiers;

Recognizing that the harmonization of pre-entry and entry policies contributes to a more efficient combat of illegal migration and trafficking in aliens;

Also recognizing that such policies shall provide for adequate provisions for the screening of asylum applications in accordance with the requirements of international law;

Being aware that discrepancies persist between the visa obligations and visa procedures adopted by the European Union and those of Central and Eastern European States;

Underlining that, in addition to foreign policy and security considerations, aspects relating to illegal migration and readmission practice are of significance when examining the need for visa obligations;

Welcoming the statement by the Minister of Interior of Slovenia that his Government would be prepared to take on a leading role in the visa approximation process of Central and Eastern European States and in providing a framework to register progress and ensure transparency in this regard;

Appreciating the increasingly accepted international standard whereby the State, which is responsible for the entry of an alien, will also bear the ultimate responsibility for the examination of his/her case and for the eventual return, except when it can be proven that another State should be in charge;

Noting that the Dublin Convention provides a system for determining the responsibility for the examination of asylum applications between Member States of the European Union and welcoming its entry into force;

13. Recommend the use of information programmes in relevant countries of origin and transit with a view to preventing illegal migration;

14. Recommend that the European Union continues its efforts aimed at informing the Associated and other States about effective practices for controls of persons at external frontiers;

15. Recommend that participating States ensure that satisfactory measures are taken to establish the identity of improperly documented aliens, and that they consider the regulation of the exchange of data in this regard at the international level, which should be in compliance with the 1981 Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, taking into account also the principles of the recommendation No. 15 of 1987 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe regulating the use of personal data in the police sector, as well as national legislation on the protection of personal data;
16. Recommend that the ICAO technical standards for the issuing of passports and visas be followed by all participating States and that they introduce systems based on machine readable passports and visas;
17. Recommend that participating States, taking the Chicago Convention into consideration, develop forms of constructive co-operation with carriers which are conducting transport service, involving assistance and training of personnel to facilitate the identification of improperly documented passengers;
18. Recommend that sanctions be introduced against carriers conducting transport service and failing to identify improperly documented passengers, by fining and holding the carriers liable for the return costs;
19. Recommend that participating States adapt progressively their visa and transit visa regimes, their procedures for issuing visas, as well as their border control practices to the relevant policies and regulations adopted by the European Union;
20. Recommend that the authority to issue visas be restricted to competent authorities which can properly assess whether the granting of a visa will not contribute to illegal activities or would harm the efforts of participating States in controlling irregular migration;
21. Recommend that provisions may be made that visas issued should expire at least 30 days before the expiration of the travel document, if this will help to ensure the return of illegal migrants;
22. Recommend that an expert meeting be held in the context of the Budapest-process in 1998, under the leadership of the Government of Slovenia, to enhance a process of approximation of visa regimes among Central and Eastern European countries, and that the European Commission renders necessary support to this process through an appropriate framework;
23. Recommend to examine how to develop a coherent European system for determining the responsibility for the examination of an asylum application, on the basis of the principles of the Dublin Convention;

Return to the country of origin and readmission agreements

Recognizing the necessity of efficient return and readmission policies becoming an integral part of the immigration systems of participating States, and that such policies constitute an essential element in the combat of illegal migration;

Reaffirming the right of every person to enter and remain on the territory of the State of which he/she is a citizen and emphasizing the obligation of each State to readmit its own citizens to its territory;

Recalling that the possibility of voluntary return should be encouraged before enforcement measures are taken, as it is the most dignified and humane solution;

(a) Return to countries of origin and their obligation to readmit

Noting that the return of illegal migrants can be made effective only through the full co-operation of the authorities of the country of origin, and, as appropriate, of those of the transit countries;

Condemning the refusal of certain States to give access to its citizens to its territory and emphasizing that such an act violates international law;

24. Recommend that participating States as far as possible give due consideration to the primary option of returning persons concerned directly to their countries of origin, as this in most cases constitutes the appropriate solution;

25. Recommend that participating States co-operate in demanding that the authorities of countries of origin extend their services in ascertaining the identity of undocumented illegal migrants who seemingly are their citizens, and in responding to such readmission requests within reasonable time limits;

26. Recommend that participating States also co-operate in demanding, when the citizenship has been recognized or is evident, that the country of origin issues a consular *laissez-passer* or a document which entitles for readmission at the shortest possible delay, and within the time limits given by national rules for detention on administrative grounds which are valid in the requesting State;

27. Recommend that participating States identify the countries which cause problems in terms of readmitting their own citizens and that they consider taking joint measures vis-à-vis these countries;

28. Recommend that participating States facilitate the transit of aliens who are being returned to their country of origin, assisting i.e. when transport problems arise and in providing escort, under cost-sharing arrangements, as appropriate;

29. Recommend that participating States agree upon a format for a standard document, similar to the one agreed upon among EU States, to serve as a consular *laissez-passer*, so as to facilitate transfer to the country of destination;

30. Recommend that the authorities of participating States co-operate with those of the countries of origin with a view to facilitating the readmission of persons concerned in their country;

31. Recommend that participating States co-operate in demanding that countries of destination and of origin cooperate in facilitating voluntary return;

32. Recommend that interested States make use of national programmes and/or the services of IOM in enhancing voluntary return directly to the country of origin;

(b) Readmission agreements

Appreciating that a significant number of readmission agreements have been concluded in recent years between States participating in the Budapest-process;

Deploring that few readmission agreements have been concluded with non-European countries;

Noting the specimen bilateral readmission agreement which has been adopted by the European Union;

Also noting the report prepared under the auspices of the Budapest Group on special problems affecting Central and Eastern European States in terms of the application of the specimen bilateral readmission agreement;

Welcoming the approach adopted by the European Union to include readmission clauses in agreements with third countries;

33. Recommend that participating States continue their efforts to conclude readmission agreements, which should contain clauses on nationals, on citizens of third countries, on transit for the sake of return and on the protection of personal data;

34. Recommend that participating States apply a standard format for readmission agreements, taking into account the specimen bilateral readmission agreement of the European Union or any other model acceptable to all participating States;

35. Recommend that States make use of the most flexible and rapid forms of readmission, i.e. readmission on the basis of a minimum of formalities between competent authorities, determined contact points, standard forms in two languages, simplified recognition of proofs, as well as other measures contributing to the efficiency of the implementation of agreements and to reducing the time in dealing with the cases;

36. Recommend that when participating States consider the abolishment of visa obligations with regard to another State, duly taking into account also the interest of other participating States, they conclude a readmission agreement with the State concerned, as appropriate;

37. Recommend that readmission clauses, relating to both nationals and third country citizens, be inserted in general co-operation agreements with countries which are sources of irregular migration, such as agreements relating to economic or political co-operation;

38. Recommend that the Inter-governmental Consultations continues to maintain an inventory of readmission instruments concluded by European States;

Information exchange on illegal migration

Reaffirming the need for increased exchange of information at all levels between participating States, with a view to combating illegal migration and trafficking in aliens, and its linkage to organized crime;

Noting that a systematic exchange of information on illegal migration has been established within the European Union, especially in the framework of a special group of the Council (CIREFI) and that Associated States have participated in certain relevant meetings in the framework of the Structured Dialogue, and have been invited to furnish information to CIREFI;

Also noting that the Inter-governmental Consultations is developing a model for collecting, analysing and transmitting information on trafficking in aliens;

Appreciating that the Government of Hungary seeks to reinforce the information exchange between, in particular, the border guard services of Central and Eastern European countries through organizing meetings and establishing an information exchange mechanism on illegal migration;

Affirming that illegal migration can only be tackled efficiently if there are comprehensive and compatible systems for the collection, processing and distribution of information which involve all participating States;

Recognizing the importance of bilateral arrangements for the relevant exchange of information;

Recognizing, however, that a prerequisite for the exchange of personal data on those involved in trafficking in aliens is the adherence to the 1981 European Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data;

39. Recommend that appropriate legislation on the protection of personal data be introduced in all participating States, in accordance with the provisions of international law;

40. Recommend that further measures be undertaken within the European Union to improve the exchange of information with Associated and other States on illegal migration and trafficking;

41. Recommend that participating States take measures to ensure that existing systems for collecting, processing and exchanging information on illegal migration and trafficking are being made compatible, by way of harmonizing definitions and criteria for data collection; to that end criteria developed within the European Union, especially by CIREFI, could usefully be taken into account;

42. Recommend that under the leadership of the Government of Hungary, and with the assistance of the Secretariat of the Budapest Group, the information exchange system between the border guards and other competent services of Central and Eastern European States is being made compatible with systems applied by other participating States, and that a comprehensive European system for the monitoring and analysis of illegal migration be established;

Technical and financial assistance to Central and Eastern European States

Recognizing that the tackling of illegal migration and trafficking calls for reinforced technical co-operation, and that such co-operation will, ultimately, benefit all States involved, but being aware that the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Prague Ministerial Conference will require substantial resources, also of a financial nature;

Being further aware that several of the Central and Eastern European States experience economic difficulties which affect their ability to meet new challenges in terms of migration;

Recognizing, thus, the necessity of pan-European solidarity with the efforts of these States, both in terms of supporting them technically and financially;

Welcoming in this regard the decision of the European Union to extend the use of PHARE funds to Justice and Home Affairs and the new orientation of the programme, which gives priority to these affairs as well as to institutional reform;

Welcoming also the findings of the recent mission of the European Union to the Newly Independent States with regard to the extension of TACIS funds for Justice and Home Affairs, and that the mission has identified illegal migration as one of the issues for co-operation between the Union and these States;

Appreciating the establishment of the Eastern Border Management Control Programme for the Baltic States, and noting that similar programmes are also required in other regions of Europe;

Recalling that the issue of a fund to assist Central and Eastern European States in returning illegal migrants was raised at the previous Ministerial Conference;

43. Recommend that Central and Eastern European States make the necessary preparations to present eligible projects for financing via bilateral and multilateral funding schemes, and that in particular Associated States elaborate projects to be funded on the basis of the new orientation of the PHARE programme;

44. Recommend that participating States examine all possibilities to make available the necessary expertise and human resources to assist Central and Eastern European States to implement relevant programmes under development within the PHARE programme;

45. Recommend that the European Commission may pay appropriate attention to the prevention of illegal immigration in preparing Partnership Agreements with the Associated States, which may be decided upon in the framework of a pre-accession strategy.

46. Recommend that a programme for co-operation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs be established with the Newly Independent States in the framework of TACIS, taking into account the findings of the recent mission of the European Union;

47. Recommend that participating States pursue their co-operation with relevant international organizations, such as the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention, UNHCR, the Council of Europe, IOM, Interpol and ICMPD with a view to establishing the necessary institutional capacities to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Prague Ministerial Conference;

48. Recommend that participating States and relevant international organizations ensure the co-ordination of measures aiming at assisting Central and Eastern European States in this regard, with a view to avoiding unnecessary overlap and securing an efficient use of the resources available;

49. Recommend that participating States assess whether the co-ordination and implementation at the national level of all measures of relevance to the tackling of illegal migration and trafficking in aliens is optimal;

50. Recommend that participating States set up adequate training and exchange schemes for persons responsible for the fight against trafficking in aliens for sexual exploitation, taking into account the example provided by the STOP programme of the European Union;

Linkage between trafficking in aliens and other forms of organized crime

Recognizing that trafficking in aliens over the last years has become increasingly sophisticated and organized and the need to examine further its inter-linkage with other forms of organized crime, such as drug trafficking;

Welcoming the growing co-operation between the European Union and the Associated States in the field of crime prevention;

Welcoming further the extension of the mandate of the Europol Drug Unit to encompass trafficking in human beings;

Referring to the initiatives taken by the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and illegal migration;

Noting the activities of Interpol and its important function in assisting Governments in combating international organized crime;

51. Recommend that participating States ensure that their national law enforcement authorities give further consideration to the links between trafficking in aliens and other forms of organized crime;

52. Recommend that participating States facilitate the bilateral and multilateral exchange of experience and information at operational levels in order to improve the knowledge of the methods used in different kinds of trafficking;

53. Recommend that the Budapest Group, in close co-operation with relevant international bodies, ensures the preparation of a study on the extent to which international organized crime is expanding its activities into trafficking in aliens;

Further co-operation between participating States

Reaffirming that the Budapest process is the only existing forum which gathers all European as well as certain non-European States in a concerted effort to combat illegal migration and trafficking also with the interest of preventing international organized crime;

Noting that only ten of the Central and Eastern European States participate in the Structured Dialogue of the European Union and that a considerable number of States which have no association to the Union do actively participate in the Budapest process;

Underlining that the activities of the Budapest process should reflect the interests and policy objectives of all participating States in balanced way;

Stressing the need for developing the co-operation with the countries of origin of illegal migrants with the aim of combating organized crime;

Urging for the development of a pan-European approach to facilitate the freedom to travel and the establishment of corresponding multilateral arrangements to ensure orderly migration;

54. Recommend that all participating States actively pursue the implementation of these Recommendations at national and international level, and that the informal working mechanisms of the Budapest process be maintained and strengthened, under the continued leadership of the Government of Hungary;

55. Recommend that the Chairmanship of the Budapest Group, with the assistance of the Secretariat, takes the necessary measures to ensure the follow-up of this Conference, including annual reporting on the implementation of the Recommendations adopted by this Conference.

Thanking:

The Government of the Czech Republic for having hosted this Conference;

The Government of Hungary for, together with the Governments of the Czech Republic and of Norway, having prepared this conference as a Chairmanship Group, and the Irish, Dutch and Luxembourg EU Presidencies as well as the European Commission and the Austrian Schengen Presidency for having actively assisted the Chairmanship Group;

The three international support bodies IOM, IGC and ICMPD for also assisting the Chairmanship Group;

The Governments of Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland for having financially contributed to the Vienna-based Secretariat of the Budapest Group;

The Governments of all States which have hosted preparatory meetings for this Conference.