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18 December 2017

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The arrested fugitive was sought by the Italian Authorities for two murders and other serious crimes committed in Italy. The Public Prosecution Office of Bologna, which coordinated the Italian investigation carried out by the Italian Carabinieri, sought the support of the judicial and law enforcement authorities of Spain, Serbia, Austria and France to identify the fugitive's whereabouts and apprehend him. Their fruitful collaboration and mutual support was instrumental to Thursday's apprehension.

In particular, the Italian and Spanish authorities formed a close partnership to secure the arrest of this dangerous fugitive, coordinated by Eurojust and supported by the Italian Central Directorate for Anti-drugs Services (Direzione centrale per i Servizi antidroga – DCSA).

Within the framework of this close cooperation, the Italian and Spanish authorities exchanged several rogatory letters, shared operational information and organised technical and operational activities on Spanish territory.

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Elke König renewed as chairperson of bank resolution board

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Press Release: EASO and Italy sign new Operating Plan

EASO enhances support to Italian asylum system

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the Italian authorities have signed a new Operating Plan which will see the Agency expand its support in the country in 2018.

The [2018 Operating Plan](#) was signed by the Executive Director of EASO, José Carreira, on behalf of the Agency, and the Head of the Department of Public Security, Franco Gabrielli, the Head of the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, Gerarda Maria Pantalone, and the Ombudsperson of Children and Adolescents, Filomena Albano, on behalf of Italy.

EASO has been increasingly active in Italy since 2013 and deploys over 200 staff throughout the country in order to provide support to the Italian authorities. The 2018 Operating Plan will add a new dimension to EASO's activities by mandating the Agency to have an enhanced role in supporting with the handling of registration of applications for international protection, including through the preparation of files in the National Asylum procedure. This measure aims at relieving some of the pressures on the Italian Asylum System.

Welcoming the new agreement, Mr. Carreira stated: "EASO's cooperation with the Italian authorities over the past four years has been nothing short of excellent. The 2018 Operating Plan, which gives EASO the opportunity to further-increase our assistance, is a testament to the mutual trust and good-faith which exists between the Agency and our Italian colleagues. As with previous years, EASO will spare no resource in ensuring that we deliver on all the mandated measures and therefore provide tangible support to the Italian asylum and reception system."

In addition to the new measures, EASO will continue to sustain the operational and technical assistance it has been providing in 2017. This includes support with information-dissemination and registrations of potential applicants; support with processing Dublin cases; strengthening reception capacity, especially with regard to unaccompanied minors; support in the professional development of the staff of the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, within the Italian Ministry of Interior, as well as in activities in the field of COI; and support to the Italian Ombudsperson for Children and Adolescents in implementing protection measures for unaccompanied minors.

On 22 November 2017, EASO and the Italian Government signed a Hosting Arrangement establishing the legal modalities through which the Agency's presence in Italy were formalised. Facilitated by this Arrangement, and in order to ensure the proper implementation of the 2018 Operating Plan, EASO will sustain the deployment of the experts and cultural mediators to Italy and provide the necessary material, technical and operational support.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

Europe – the continent of solidarity: Joint Statement on the occasion of International Migrant Day

On the occasion of International Migrant Day on 18 December, Frans **Timmermans**, First Vice-President of the Commission, Federica **Mogherini**, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Neven **Mimica**, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, and Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, made the following statement:

“On International Migrant Day, we remember all those who live outside their country of birth and are on the move – either by choice or forcibly. We remember that our own continent, Europe, is built on migration. Our common history is marked by millions of people fleeing from persecution, war or dictatorship – looking only 100 years back. Today, our European Union allows people across the continent to freely travel, to study and work in other countries. This has made Europe one of the richest places in the world – in terms of culture, of economy, of opportunities and in terms of liberties. But this day is also an occasion to remember those who have left their homes, in the face of conflict, political oppression, poverty or lack of hope, and who struggle to build a new and decent life elsewhere. While for some, migration is a positive and empowering experience, too many others have to endure human rights violations, xenophobia, exploitation and unacceptable living conditions along their journeys.

Protecting and upholding the fundamental rights and freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their status, has always been and will always be our priority. This is at the heart of our European Agenda on Migration. We are working relentlessly, inside and outside the European Union, in close cooperation with our Member States and our international partners to save lives, provide protection, offer safe and legal pathways for migration and tackle the root causes that force people to leave their homes in first place, as well as fight the criminal networks that often take advantage of people’s despair.

We have a shared responsibility towards people on the move and we need to act on a global scale to support them and to uphold the safety, dignity and human rights of migrants and refugees. It requires the engagement and the consistent implementation of international agreements by all.

Europe is committed to remaining the continent of solidarity, tolerance and openness, embracing its share of global responsibility. And for those who we have recently welcomed to Europe, we want the same as we want for all Europeans, namely to prosper and flourish and contribute to a better future for our continent.

We strongly support the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and will continue to actively work towards the adoption of the UN Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees at the United Nations.”

Background

Over the past 20 years, the European Union has put in place some of the highest common asylum standards in the world. And in the past two years, European migration policy has advanced in leaps and bounds with the European Agenda on Migration proposed by the Juncker Commission in May 2015. Progressively, a more united approach to dealing with migration is emerging, internally and externally.

Internally, work has been intensified on the reform of the Common European Asylum System to put in place a more effective and fair approach, based on solidarity and responsibility, alongside continuous support to the Member States most exposed and reinforced cooperation with partner countries.

The European Union has also stepped up its efforts to protect vulnerable groups, in particular children who are among the most exposed of migrants, including through new Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child and [recommendations](#) on the protection of children in migration.

Externally, the EU has progressively put in place a genuine external dimension of its migration policy, complementing and reinforcing its actions within the Union. The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development recognises the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. It also recognises that both challenges and opportunities of migration must be addressed through coherent and comprehensive responses.

Along the migratory routes, we are working to save people's lives with our international partners, such as the UN agencies. We are fighting the criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling and in trafficking in human beings, through our Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations on the ground and by supporting regional initiatives, such as the G5 Sahel Joint Force. We are also conducting search and rescue operations at sea, with the support of the European Border and Coast Guard and EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia. These efforts help to save thousands of lives every month.

The EU also works on opening up safe and legal pathways through resettlement – to allow those in need of protection to come to Europe without having to risk their lives in the desert and at sea. An ambitious target for the resettlement of 50,000 persons in need of international protection was set by

President Juncker in September 2017. A particular focus should be put on resettlement from North Africa and the Horn of Africa, notably **Libya, Egypt, Niger, Sudan, Chad and Ethiopia**, whilst ensuring continued resettlement from **Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon**.

We also continue, jointly with our UN and civil society partners on the ground, to support concrete actions in Libya and along the migratory routes, to ensure the respect of human rights, improve migrants' living conditions and assist migrants and refugees, who too often become victims of smuggling and trafficking networks. The establishment of a joint Task Force between the African Union, the United Nations and the EU, is an important step that will help to accelerate our joint work. In concrete terms, actions will aim to evacuate those in need of international protection to Europe, accelerate the assisted voluntary returns to countries of origin for those stranded in Libya, as well as intensify our efforts to dismantle criminal networks.

For More Information

[Joint African Union-European Union-United Nations Task Force to Address the Migrant Situation in Libya](#)

[2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#)

[Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the protection of children in migration](#)

[EU Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child](#)