

**BULLETIN**  
No. 518, August the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006

**The Vice-President of the European Commission, Franco Frattini,  
visiting the International Police Co-operation Centre within M.A.I.**

Today, the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2006, the Vice-President of the European Commission - Franco Frattini has visited the **National Focal Point** and the **Regional SECI Centre (The Regional Centre for Countering Trans-border Crime)**.

On this occasion, the European commissioner congratulated the representatives of these MAI units on the results obtained so far, recommending them to carry on their efforts, and expressed his availability to support their undertakings.

At the same time, the Vice-President of the European Commission underlined that it is very important to ensure the travel documents security by introducing the biometric passports in the whole region, Romania intending to meet this requirement by 1 January 2007.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The **National Focal Point** is the specialized unit of the Ministry of Administration and Interior responsible for the management of the flow of operational information in matters related to trans-border crime prevention and countering. At the same time, the National Focal Point ensures the operational connection between the Romanian authorities and the internal affairs attachés/ foreign liaison officers and those of M.A.I. accredited with other states or international organizations.

The **Regional SECI Centre (The Regional Centre for Countering Trans-border Crime)** is unique in the South-Eastern Europe and permits the co-ordination of the operational actions at regional level, the development of multi-national investigations, as well as the providing of high-level training for the police officers of the member states.

The SECI Centre, based in Bucharest, is regarded as an example of cooperation for countering trans-border crime.

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**THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION APPRECIATED THE PROGRESS RECORDED BY THE MINISTRY  
OF ADMINISTRATION AND INTERIOR**

*“As far as the ensuring of security is concerned, Romania is on the right path”*, stated the Vice-President of the European Commission, the commissioner for Justice, Liberty and Security, Franco Frattini after his meeting with the Minister of Administration and Interior, Vasile Blaga, at the headquarters of the Ministry of Administration and Interior.

The meeting between the two officials, held this morning, opens the series of meetings that the Vice-President of the European Commission is going to have today, during his official visit in Romania.

Over the official talks, Minister Vasile Blaga presented before the European commissioner the progress that M.A.I. has achieved since the latest Monitoring Report issued on 16 May 2006; after the meeting the two officials delivered the following press statements:

The Minister of Administration and Interior, Vasile Blaga:

*“Today, I have the honour to meet again with Mr. Frattini; I informed him of the progress that we have achieved since 16 May, especially in the field of the border security, organised crime countering, migration and asylum conditions, the complete filling in of the vacancies within our structures at the future EU outer border; measures are being taken so that, on the 1 November, two months before the deadline, all the units of the Border Police could be connected to the central unit, that means they will have online access to the database; we also want the visa stickers to be printed, in compliance with the European standards, in 82 this kind of units”*

*We have shown, at the same time, that we are going to introduce the biometric passport by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007; in this matter there is an serious competition, the auction being scheduled to take place in the middle August. We also presented to Mr. Frattini the steps that we have to further take, by the 1 January and after, since a new more difficult process will start for us - the one that we have to follow in view of joining the Schengen area.”*

Vice-President of the European Commission, the commissioner for Justice, Liberty and Security, Franco Frattini:

*“As I have already said, I am extremely pleased with the progress that Romania has made, both before the Report presented on the 16 May 2006 and after it. As the Minister showed in his presentation, important measures have been accomplished in line with the border security of the outer borders, since Romania is going to play an important part in ensuring the future outer border of the European Union, through this border integrate management programme, which is a very ambitious one. I believe that the progress achieved by your ministry in line with the recruitment of new personnel within the Border Police is equally very important. We must remember that the new personnel have to be properly trained; and presently different training programmes are being developed.*

*I also take this opportunity to welcome the setting up of the National Agency for Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings and Monitoring the Assistance Granted to its Victims, which, as you know, the European Commission regarded with high interest, and I think that, in this regard as well, Romania will play a crucial part.*

*Another strategic area where Romania is going to play an important part is the Western Balkans co-operation. We have to remember that, presently, Romania has a special relation with many states in this region, and we count on its help, in supporting the EU strategy in the visas regime.*

*I believe that the enforcement has to continue, but I also believe that, as far as the ensuring of security is concerned, Romania is on the right path.”*

#### **INVITATION**

No. 516 , July the 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006

On Tuesday, August the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, at 9.00 hrs, the Minister of Administration and Interior, Vasile Blaga, is meeting the Vice-President of the European Commission, the Commissioner for Justice, Liberty and Security, Franco Frattini, at the headquarters of the Ministry of Administration and Interior.

At the end of their meeting, the two officials will deliver **short press statements, starting with 9.45.**

This activity is included in the agenda of the visit that the European official is making in our country, on 31 July and on 1 August 2006.

At the same time, on Tuesday, August the 1<sup>st</sup>, starting with 11.45, the Vice-President of the European Commission will visit the **National Focal Point** – a specialized unit of the Ministry of Administration and Interior that ensures the operational connection between the Romanian authorities and the internal affairs attachés/ foreign liaison officers and those of M.A.I. accredited with other states or international organizations -, as well as **the Regional SECI Centre (The Regional Centre for Countering Trans-border Crime)** – a unique centre in the South-Eastern Europe, which allows the co-ordination of the operational actions at regional level, the development of multi-national investigations, as well as the providing of high-level training for the police officers of the member states.

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***The journalists accredited with the Ministry of Administration and Interior are invited to take part in this activity, which will take place at the MAI headquarters (1A Revolutiei Square, Sector 1, Buicharest, at 9.30 hrs).***

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN ROMANIA AND BULGARIA ON BUILDING AND RENDERING FUNCTIONAL THE NEW MIXED BORDER BRIDGE (FOR BOTH ROAD AND RAILWAY TRAFFIC) ACROSS THE DANUBE**

On **July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006**, Mr. Alexandru MIRCEA, Secretary of State within the Ministry of Administration and Interior of Romania, will sign in Sofia, on behalf of the Romanian Government, the *Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of Bulgaria on the border crossing by individuals, means of transport, equipment and materials, in the process of the building and rendering functional of the new Mixed Bridge (for both road and railway traffic) at the border between the two states, across the Danube.*

On behalf of the Bulgarian Government, the document will be signed by Ms. Vesela GOSPODINOVA, the Deputy Minister of Transport from Bulgaria.

During his visit in Sofia, Mr. Alexandru MIRCEA, Secretary of State, will be accompanied by a delegation of experts within the Ministry of Administration and Interior and the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, and will have a short meeting with the Bulgarian Minister of Transport – Peter Vasilev MUTAFCHIEV.

Once concluded, this Agreement provides the necessary legal framework for the Romanian-Bulgarian border crossing by individuals, means of transport, equipment and materials required by the process of the building and rendering functional of the new Mixed Bridge at Calafat – Vidin, scheduled to begin in May 2007.

The Ministry of Administration and Interior, through the Border Police, is one of the Romanian authorities with attributions in the application of the respective Agreement, among which the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, and other responsible institutions with responsibilities in this field.