

Bucharest, December 23, 2008

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**BULLETIN**

On the 23rd of December 2008, Mr. Gabriel Oprea took over the mandate of the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior. At this ceremony he was seconded by the Romanian Prime Minister, Emil Boc.

On this occasion, he appreciated the activity of his predecessors, Mr. Vasile Blaga and Mr. Cristian David as being successful and he stated that his mandate will be focused on three major directions: citizens' safety, decentralization of the local communities and the accession to Schengen Area.

The Prime Minister, Emil Boc stated that he will support the activity of the ministry and of the employees, asking for a strongly and correctly upholding of law.

At the same time, the former ministry of interior and administrative reform, Mr. Cristian David, assured his successor of his entire availability in finding the best solutions reach the objectives of the ministry.

Bucharest, December 4, 2008

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**BULLETIN**

At the end of November, the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform (MIRA) received the European Commission Final Decision on the approving, for Romania, of the Annual Program for 2008 regarding the European Fund for the Return of the third-country nationals.

This is a financial instrument of the European Commission, part of the General Program "Solidarity and the Migration Flows Management", beside the European Fund for Refugees, the European Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Third-Country Nationals and the External Borders' Fund.

The total sum of money allotted to Romania from the European Return Fund, for the financial year 2008, amounts for 770,622.48 Euros.

The General Directorate for European Affairs and International Relations of MIRA is the authority responsible for the management of the funds allotted through the General Program "Solidarity and the Migration Flows Management".

As soon as possible, the potentially interested beneficiaries – national/ regional/ local authorities, NGOs, other organizations, entities of public and private law, international organizations – will receive the instructions regarding the possibility to use these funds, once they are drawn up by the Romanian Immigration Office, as the Delegated Paying and Contracting Authority for the funds within this program.

The European Return Fund is mainly aimed at supporting and enhancing the efforts made by the Member-States in view of implementing some common standards on returning the third-country nationals, for an effective and integrated management of the issue, in compliance with the fundamental human rights and according to the evolution of the policies in this area.

Bucharest, December 3, 2008

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**BULLETIN**

On Friday, December 5, 2008, in Brussels, Romania's answers to the Schengen Questionnaire will be presented and analyzed within the framework of the Reunion of the Working Group SCHEVAL. This event will be attended by a delegation of MIRA, led by principal questor Vasile Gabriel NITA, secretary of state, Head of the Schengen Department.

The Schengen Questionnaire is an extended document (officially received in September this year) including about 250 detailed questions on all the Schengen-related domains, offering a realistic picture on the current stage of the Schengen provisions' enforcement. The answers will be discussed and analyzed in the context of the SCHEVAL Working Group – comprising representatives of the Member-States, European Commission and Secretary General of the EU Council.

After the analysis of the answers to the Schengen questionnaire, there will start the evaluation visits, during which the European experts will check out the actual stage of the implementation of the Schengen acquis. These visits will be organized starting March 2009, on the following areas: police

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cooperation; personal data protection; visas, maritime/ terrestrial frontiers and airports; SIS/ SIRENE.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the actions taken by the Schengen Department with the EU French Presidency and the Secretariat General, on September 17, 2008, Romania officially received the Schengen Questionnaire. This was the second stage of the Schengen Evaluation Process, after Romania sent the Preparedness Declaration on the Schengen Area Accession on June 28, 2007 and on June 2, 2008. On November 10, our country officially sent the answers to the questions included in the Schengen Questionnaire.

Romania established March 2011 as a deadline for its joining to the Schengen territory. Once this step taken, Romania will have the advantage of belonging to an area free of internal borders, where citizens will be able to freely move in a zone of liberty, security and justice.

Bucharest, November the 10th, 2008

## BULLETIN

Between 10 and 13 November, 2008, the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform – by the Postgraduate Studies Centre – is organising, with the support of its partners from Spain and EUROJUST and under the aegis of the European Police College (CEPOL), the seminar called “Joint Investigation Teams”.

This course is aimed at 30 participants from the EU Member States who will have the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of the Romanian, Spanish and French specialists in the area, as well as from the experience of the representatives of some international organisms having attributions in the carrying out of the common activities of investigation.

The working sessions of this seminar will focus on various topics regarding the specific police activity, being mainly meant to inform participants of the legislation and the procedures used by the joint investigation teams which are directly involved in the investigation of those crimes whose solutions require harmonised actions taken within the territory of the EU countries.

This meeting will represent, to all the 30 participants, not only an excellent opportunity to acquire new information in this specific domain and to share the EU partners’ expertise, but also a great occasion to acquire the best practices regarding the activity of the joint investigation teams, for improving the police cooperation developed in investigating the crimes committed within the territory of more EU Member States.

Bucharest, October the 30th, 2008

## BULLETIN

On Friday, October 31, secretary of state in MIRA Marin Patuleanu is attending the Reunion of the Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs/ Public Order within the states participating in the South-Eastern Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), event to be held in Chisinau/ Republic of Moldova.

One of the most important questions of the reunion agenda will refer to the cooperation in justice and home affairs issues, in view of effectively countering trans-border organised crime, trafficking in human beings, drugs and weapons, corruption as well as other serious crimes.

At the same time, the debates held in this context will focus on aspects regarding the necessity of ensuring some juridical guarantees for countering the illegal processing of the personal data and for enhancing international cooperation in view of countering trans-border cyber crimes.

The climax of this reunion, developed according to the calendar of the SEECP Presidency, currently held by the Republic of Moldova, will be represented by the adoption of the Common Declaration of the Interior Ministers from the states participating in the South-Eastern Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP) on enhancing cooperation in countering cyber crimes.

The signing of this document reconfirms the fact that the states participating in SEECP are concerned interested in significantly contributing to the improvement of the existing instruments, in view of effectively preventing and countering crimes.

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Bucharest, October the 29th, 2008

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**BULLETIN**

The Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, through its unit – the National Archives – will offer the representatives of the Holocaust Memorial Museum improved conditions to investigate the history of Holocaust and the history of the Hebrew community in Romania of that time.

The secretary of state within the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform Marin Patuleanu and the Director of the International Archives' Program Division of the Holocaust Memorial Museum Ph.D. Radu Ioanid, signed today, Oct. 29, at the headquarters of the ministry, the Protocol concluded between the National Archives of the Romanian Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform and the Memorial Museum of Holocaust of the United States of America on amending the Cooperation Agreement between the two institutions, signed in Bucharest, on July 3, 2006.

This legal instrument is the follow-up of the negotiations held between the representatives of the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the National Archives, and is part of the wider Romanian-American cooperation process implying the study of Holocaust and of the Hebrew community's history.

The necessity of this Agreement's amendment came from the Holocaust Memorial Museum's desire to extend the research on the Holocaust phenomenon beyond its particular chronological time, as well as the research on the affected Hebrew community.

**Background information**

The National Archives of Romania develops cooperation relationships with more national archive administrations, as well as with various organizations interested in archives area. One of these organizations is the US Holocaust Memorial Museum which is mainly meant to disseminate information on the tragedy of Holocaust. For gathering data on the Hebrews' drama during the Second World War, the Museum investigates the archives of the countries within the territory of which Holocaust-related events occurred. The cooperation with the National Archives of Romania is part of the contacts which the Museum established with the institutions storing historical documents of Romania. The terms of this cooperation were agreed upon through the Agreements successively concluded starting 1999. Thus, hundreds of copies of the documents stored in the Romanian National Archives have been sent to the Holocaust Memorial Museum so far.

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Bucharest, October the 9th, 2008

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**BULLETIN**

Today the Minister of Interior and Administrative Reform Cristian David had a meeting with his Italian counterpart Roberto Maroni, in the context of the Intergovernmental Romanian-Italian Summit in Rome. The Heads of the Romanian Border Police of Romania and Italy and principal quaestor Nelu Pop and Rodolfo Ronconi also participated in these discussions.

The two ministers mainly discussed on the continuation of the Italian-Romanian police co-operation, emphasizing the common results reached during the missions carried out within the territory of Italy. In this context, as a consequence of the effectiveness of ITARO mission, the ITARO 6 mission was decided to start next week.

During this meeting, the Head of the Romanian Border Police and his Italian counterpart signed a Memorandum that specifies both the common missions had in view in the harbor and airport zones of the two countries with a significant travelers' traffic between Romania and Italy, as well as various provisions regarding the bi-lateral cooperation for Romania's joining the Schengen Territory.

By signing this Memorandum there will be settled the new terms of the border police cooperation between the two countries, which is currently based on the Cooperation Protocol between the Ministry of Administration and Interior of Romania and the Ministry of Interior of the Italian Ministry, signed in Bucharest on December 19, 2006, and the Agreement between the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform of Romania and the Ministry of Interior of the Italian Republic signed in Bucharest on November 22, 2007.

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Bucharest, October the 1st, 2008

**BULLETIN**

Yesterday afternoon, Minister of Interior and Administrative Reform Cristian David had a work meeting with an Italian delegation including Home Minister Roberto Maroni and Minister of Justice Angelino Alfano.

This official meeting, which precedes the common work reunion of the Romanian and Italian Governments, was attended by secretary of state within Minister of Justice Sorin Mihai Stanescu, as well as by representatives of the MIRA units.

The official discussions referred to the police and juridical co-operation and to the enforcement of the Agreement concluded between the Governments of Romania and the Italian Republic on cooperating in ensuring protection for the Romanian unaccompanied children who are underage or in need within the territory of Italy, as well as on the transfer of the convicted persons with final sentences.

As for the police cooperation, both parties highly appreciated the outcomes reached within the ITARO mission, as well as in the special TASK-FORCE missions developed by the Romanian policemen in Italy.

There were briefly presented the results of the police cooperation including the development of three operational missions in Italy this year, as a number of 42 MIRA representatives were sent in operational missions. The Romanian policemen participated in over 1,000 operational actions resulting in 218 Romanians who were arrested and in 290 Romanians who were investigated without being detained. The "GALATI" operation was very much appreciated, as it was meant to dismantle a prostitution network widely spread within the territory of Romania, Spain and Italy, which resulted in 11 Romanians arrested (5 in Romania, 4 in Italy, 1 in Spain and 1 in Morocco).

For going on reaching the good results acquired so far, the Romanian home minister announced that he will increase the number of the internal attachés in Italy, as other three officers will be sent in Trieste, Bologna and Cosenza, beside the ones already sent in Rome and Milan.

At the same time, regarding the countering of organized crime, the Romanian and Italian officials discussed on going on the ITARO mission. Thus, the number of the Romanian policemen working with the Italian partners will increase to 15.

As for the juridical cooperation, the two delegations agreed on the setting up of a work group able to cooperate in order to speed up the enforcement of the Agreement on transferring the persons convicted; in this context, the Romanian party underlined that these procedures will have to be in total compliance with the international law, domestic law and human rights.

For improving the mechanism of social rehabilitation of the communities, there was decided that the Italian prefects should start to collaborate with the Romanian authorities in order to identify the best integration measures.

Minister Cristian David considered the discussions very constructive, and stated: "This meeting is developing in the context of the good relationship between our countries; it was based on an honest and constructive dialogue, starting from a realistic and pragmatic approach of a reality that we have to understand, accept and respond to properly. And maybe it is very well that this meeting is taking place right here, in Bucharest, and right now, without public or media pressure, as pragmatic solutions can be reached which can lead to firm answers to the problems we are facing."

In turn, Minister Roberto Maroni said: "The today meeting was very constructive, having in view the high-level meeting to be held on October 9; we discussed on the attributions of both the Home Ministry and the Ministry of Justice, so as to reach some common commitments by 9 October".

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Bucharest, September the 30th, 2008

**BULLETIN**

Romanian-Bulgarian-Serbian common actions meant to evaluate the intervention capacity in cases related to organized and trans-border crimes

The home ministers of Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, present today in the tri-lateral meeting in

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Belgrade, signed an Inter-governmental Enlarged Cooperation Protocol on Countering Organized Crimes, Especially the Trans-border Ones.

By this Protocol, the three countries agreed to jointly organize some actions, the first three ones to be carried out this year.

These actions will check the common reaction and intervention capacity in cases related to organized and trans-border crimes.

One simulation action will relate to a terrorist attack against a critical building in one of the three countries.

Other two actions will refer to increasing the border control on definite periods of time and to taking some additional measures meant to counter illegal migration and human/ vehicle trafficking, as well as to taking some certain actions at the border level which require the cooperation between the units responsible for countering organized crime from the three states.

Minister Cristian David put forward to the Serbian minister the proposal of involving in the regional project on intervention in emergency situations, which was the last year initiative of the Romanian home minister, and he also underlined the support that Romania can offer to Serbia in its EU pre-accession process.

The cooperation protocol was signed by the minister of interior and administrative reform Mr. Cristian David, the deputy of the Prime-Minister of Serbia and home minister Mr. Ivica DACIC and the minister of interior affairs of the Bulgarian Republic Mr. Mihail MIKOV.

Bucharest, September the 29th, 2008

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#### BULLETIN

##### Tri-lateral Romanian-Bulgarian-Serbian co-operation on countering trans-border crime

The minister of interior and administrative reform Cristian David is participating in the tri-lateral reunion of the home ministers of Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia on 28-30 September 2008, in Belgrade. The agenda of this event includes a round of official discussions on current topics of interest, such as: border security, countering trans-border organized crime, regional cooperation, Romanian authorities' expertise and actions taken in view of preparing the EU accession in the area of home affairs.

The reunion program also includes the signing - by the Governments of Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia - of the Enlarged Cooperation Protocol on Countering Organized Crimes, Especially the Trans-border Ones. This new legal instrument will make it possible for the three countries to better cooperate in the area of home affairs, by developing an effective exchange of opinions on the European standards and best practices.

At the same time, based on this Protocol, the institutions responsible for the enforcement of its provisions will be provided with the entire juridical base necessary to cooperate in combating crimes, especially the trans-border type, but also in other domains, by capitalizing on the existing cooperation instruments.

The climax of the activity will be the moment when the three ministers will be welcomed by the President of the Serbian Republic Boris TADICI, scheduled to take place on September 30.

The main message of the Romanian representatives will be the reiteration of Romania's total availability in cooperating and offering its entire expertise required by the European and North-Atlantic accession processes to the Serbian authorities having responsibilities in the area of home affairs.

Bucharest, September the 25th, 2008

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#### BULLETIN

Today, September 25, 2008, principal quaestor Vasile Gabriel NITA, Secretary of State and Head of the public Order and Safety Department within MIRA, participated in the Reunion of the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Brussels, which gathers the home ministers of the member states of the European Union.

This event aimed at discussing some topics of interest for the participating countries on migration, such as "the European Pact on immigration and asylum" and the Council Directive regarding the requirements for the highly-qualified third country's nationals to enter a country and reside there. At the same time, on the reunion agenda there have been talks on the right to reside for the third

country's nationals married to EU citizens, as well as on illegal migration.

During the conference, the MIRA representative underlined that Romania really supports the EU citizens' fundamental right to travel and settle within the territory of the EU member states, as well as of their family members' right, as provided by the *acquis communautaire* and by the Directive No. 38/2004. Also, the Romanian official emphasized that, considering its position at the outer border of the EU, Romania is highly interested in combating all its types of illegal migration.

This reunion of the JHA Council, which follows the Ministerial Conference "Building a Europe of Asylum", held on September 8-9 in Paris, is aimed at enhancing a unitary European outlook on migration and asylum.

Bucharest, September the 17th, 2008

BULLETIN

#### ROMANIA WAS OFFICIALLY GIVEN THE SCHENGEN QUESTIONNAIRE

Following the actions taken by the Schengen Department with the EU French Presidency and the Secretariat General, Romania was officially given the Schengen Questionnaire on September 17, 2008.

This is the second stage of the Schengen Evaluation Process, after Romania sent the Preparedness Declaration on the Schengen Area Accession on June 28, 2007 and on June 2, 2008.

The Schengen Questionnaire is an extended document including about 250 detailed questions on all the relevant aspects regarding the enforcement of the Schengen provisions.

Romania will have approximately 2 months to answer this questionnaire and subsequently its answers will be analyzed and discussed within the framework of the Schengen Evaluation Working Group in Brussels, occasion on which the Member States will have the opportunity to ask additional questions.

After the analysis of the answers to the Schengen questionnaire, there will start the evaluation visits in five domains such as: police cooperation, personal data protection, borders and SIS.

Romania established March 2011 as a deadline for its joining to the Schengen territory. Once this step taken, Romania will have the advantage of belonging to an area free of internal borders, where citizens will be able to freely move in a zone of liberty, security and justice.