

BULLETIN
No. 35, the 6th of February 2009

Representatives of the Ministry of Administration and Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Romanian Intelligence Service and of the General Consulate within the Embassy of the USA in Bucharest met to discuss on the stage of the Romania's fulfillment of the criteria required for qualifying within the framework of the US Visa Waiver Program.

The meeting took place at the MAI Headquarters on Thursday, February 5, 2009, and it is the first of the kind after our institution and the US Homeland Security Department signed - on November 3, 2008, in Washington - *the Common Declaration on the cooperation principles in view of strengthening the bi-lateral security measures for international travels and the Visa Waiver Program requirements.*

The talks focused on the effective exchange of ideas and points of view, especially on the achievements recorded in those particular fields the Program requirements refer to.

In this context, there were presented the latest actions taken and applied by the Romanian authorities related to the travel document security, namely to the biometric passport issuance. There were also discussed the issues relating to border security and to the actions meant to counter illegal migration, organized crime and terrorism.

The representatives of the General Consulate within the US Embassy highly appreciated the cooperation with the Romanian relevant authorities, reiterating their full availability for continuing this dialogue in view of finding the best solutions to attaining their goals.

This reunion of the inter-institutional group developed under the direct coordination of the General Directorate for European Affairs and International Relations within MAI.

BULLETIN
No. 39 on February 9th, 2009

The American Anti-Drug Agency (DEA) and the Romanian Police cooperate to stop the second transport of cocaine from Brazil to Romania

The US Embassy in Romania and the Ministry of Administration and Interior (MAI) organized a common press conference for presenting the details regarding the recent seizure of app. 4 tones of cocaine. This action is the outcome of the investigation jointly carried out by the American Anti-Drug Agency (DEA), the Romanian Police, the General Directorate of Countering Organised Crime (DGCCO), the Directorate of Investigating

the Crimes implying Organised Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) and the Federal Brazilian Police (DPF).

We remind that on January 29, 2009, in the Agigea Harbour, Constanta/ Romania, DGCCO seized 1203.9 kg of cocaine found in two tanks that had just arrived from Paranagua Harbour/ Brazil. The drugs were hidden in a cedar container. Four persons were detained by the DGCCO.

During the investigation, DGCCO cooperated with the DEA, which has a representative at the Regional SECI Centre, exchanging information on the cocaine quantities shipped to Romania. On February 5, 2009, during a common action, DEA/DPF carried out in Paranagua, more containers were identified and localized. The tank search led to the identification of app. 3780 kg cocaine hidden in a wooden container. Those tanks were to reach Romania. The common investigation will continue if new information comes up.

The Attaché of the American Anti-Drug Agency in Romania Harry Giknavorian explained during a press conference that the investigation is ongoing: “DEA and the Regional SECI Centre supported and will further support the efforts made by the Romanian Police (DGCCO), the Directorate of Investigating the Crimes implying Organised Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) and the Federal Brazilian Police (DPF) in carrying out these investigations”. At the same time, he underlined the good co-operation between the law enforcement agencies from Romania, Brazil and the USA: “This common investigation carried out by DEA/DGCCO/DIICOT/DPF is a proof of the excellent relationship and the partnership between those particular law enforcement agencies. It also proves that DEA and the international partner institutes co-operate in view of identifying and deterring the international drug trafficking networks.”

Present at the common press conference organized by the US Embassy in Bucharest, the Sub-secretary of Stat with the MAI commissioner-in-chief Toma Rus stated: “This operation is not only a great success in the fight against drug trafficking, but also a clear message, on behalf of our country, that Romania is not and won't be an open door for the drugs' entering into the European area.”

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PRESS RELEASE
No. 55 on February 26th, 2009

Bi-lateral meeting in Brussels between the Romanian and Italian Ministers of Interior

Present in Brussels, at the Justice and Home Affairs Council, Mr. Dan Nica, Vice prime-minister and Minister of Administration and Interior had various bi-lateral meetings with European officials: **Wolfgang Schäuble** - the German Minister of Interior, **Jacques Barrot** – Vice-president of the European Commission, responsible for the Justice, Liberty and Security area, **Jacqui Smith** – the British Home Office Minister, and **Roberto Maroni** – the Italian Minister of Interior.

During the bi-lateral meeting with the Italian Minister of Interior, the two officials agreed upon some common strategic decisions and top-priority objectives: the fight against those who infringe legislation, the protection of those who obey the law, and the deterring of criminal activity.

Also, the Italian Home Minister underlined that 99.9 per cent of the Romanians in Italy are socially integrated, do not commit any crime, context within which minister Nica emphasized the fact that these citizens had to be protected.

The two officials expressed their determination to effectively counter all activities related to organized crime, in both Italy and Romania.

The Italian Minister of Interior Roberto Maroni highly appreciated and thanked for the contribution that the Romanian Police made in Italy. The two officials also decided that at the beginning of March a team of experts within the Ministry of Administration and Interior would go to Rome in order to decide, together with their Italian counterparts, specific modalities of strengthening police cooperation between the two states. They will analyze the profile of the policemen who are needed for the development of this cooperation component.

In turn, Minister Dan Nica launched an invitation for the Italian Prefects to visit Romania so as to personally inform of the present situation, in view of developing new common initiatives and projects.

Background Information

The Justice and Home Affairs Council is taking place in Brussels on 26-27 February 2009, and it is the first time that Mr. Dan Nica has participated in this kind of reunions as Minister of Administration and Interior.

On the agenda of the meeting there are various issues relating to the Visa Information System (VIS), the conclusions of the Council regarding the Schengen Information System (SIS II), the debate on the regulations referring to the setting up of the European Asylum Support Office, as well as the setting of an anti-drug policy based on rational decisions.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT