



Milan Chovanec
Minister of Interior

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Dear Commissioner,

Allow me by this to react to your recent points of view about migration published in mid-August in the Czech media encompassing numerous fundamental declarations directed towards the Czech Republic.

I entirely agree with you that the halting of irregular migration shall remain one of our chief priorities, calling for a unified approach at the European level. Our aim must be defined by the creation of a truly safe and sustainable migration system stemming from effective safeguard of the external EU borders, enhanced cooperation with countries of origin and transit and expansion of refugee aid closest to the place of their first displacement.

This way of working has already proven itself to be worthy at the Western Balkan route / Eastern Mediterranean migration route, where the situation has been successfully stabilized following the EU – Turkey Statement and the enormous measures taken by the individual Member States, including the Czech Republic. Together with the deployment of national experts to the joint Frontex operations, the Czech Republic has been continuously since 2015 involved in protecting the borders between Macedonia and Greece and borders in the region, such as currently in Serbia. Altogether we have deployed over 350 policemen to the joint Frontex operations and additional 700 policemen based on bilateral agreements.

The Czech Republic will be engaged equally in the Central Mediterranean with the same active approach and solidarity. We have been one of the first Member States to respond to the European Commission call for financial contributions into the North of Africa Window of

the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Based on my recommendation the Czech Government already on 24 July 2017 approved a financial contribution in amount of 24 million Czech crowns (918 500 EUR) in support of the Libyan Coast Guard programme.

Expert help to Italy, but also to Greece, has been offered uninterruptedly as of 2015. In light of the amplified need over the past months, the Czech Republic has responded with an intensified deployment of national experts in support of EASO activities. There are currently five Czech experts deployed in Italian hotspots and other deployment nominations are being arranged. In total almost 70 national experts have been deployed to both countries since autumn 2015.

Likewise, in my letter from June this year addressed to my Italian counterpart, Minister Minniti, I have openly professed the readiness of the Czech Republic to bilaterally provide Italy with need of any kind required.

Member of the European Commission
Dimitris Avramopoulos
European Commission
B r u s s e l s

Verified by: Mgr. Pavla Novotná
Director of Department for Asylum and Migration