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PRESS RELEASE

European Asylum Support Office to send Asylum Support Teams to Luxembourg

On 26 January 2012, in the margins of the informal meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Copenhagen, Dr Robert K. Visser, Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and Nicolas Schmit, Minister of Labour, Employment and Immigration of Luxembourg, signed an agreement on the Deployment of Asylum Support Teams to Luxembourg. Luxembourg requested EASO support by providing asylum training to newly hired staff in view of an unexpected significant influx of asylum seekers which brought Luxembourg close to its capacity limits. EASO Asylum Support Teams shall be deployed already as from next week.

On 10 January 2012 EASO received a request for support from the Minister of Labour, Employment and Immigration of Luxembourg, Nicolas Schmit. Following this request, on 11 January 2012, the Executive Director of EASO pledged Asylum Support teams to Luxembourg. During 2011 Luxembourg has faced particular asylum pressures, where the number of asylum seekers almost tripled compared to 2010. This unexpected significant influx of asylum seekers brought Luxembourg, in particular the Refugee Unit in the Directorate of Immigration of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, close to its capacity limits. Luxembourg immediately hired new staff to deal with the increase in asylum cases.

Luxembourg requested EASO to urgently train newly hired staff in the reinforced Refugee Unit. The aim of this support is to train the new staff on the EU asylum acquis so asylum cases can be handled effectively, backlogs reduced and the principles of the Common European Asylum System will be guaranteed.

Following today's signing of the Operating Plan, next week EASO will be sending Asylum Support Teams to Luxembourg to provide emergency training to newly hired staff. The Asylum Support Teams will offer emergency European Asylum Curriculum (EAC) training to newly hired staff according to the EU asylum acquis. The training will specifically concentrate on "drafting and decision making" and "interview techniques". EASO measures in Luxembourg are identified as short term emergency actions.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@ext.ec.europa.eu