

Press Release

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Prime Minister of Malta visits EASO

Dr Robert K. Visser, Executive Director of EASO today held a meeting with Dr Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta. The two discussed the Common European Asylum System, the asylum situation in Malta, and the measures and ways in which EASO can provide support to Member States, in particular to those Member States which are under particular asylum pressures. The meeting was held at the headquarters of the European Asylum Support Office in Malta.

During the meeting, Dr Robert K. Visser, EASO Executive Director, thanked the Prime Minister for the support which the Maltese Government has provided to EASO in its set-up phase. He also explained the various support measures which EASO has made available for Member States. These measures include: training of asylum officials; providing tailor-made assistance to Member States; capacity building; emergency support; providing common country of origin information; and EASO's Early warning and Preparedness System which aims at detecting situations likely to give rise to particular asylum pressures. Dr Visser held that the agency is ready to continue supporting the asylum system of Malta and together with the Maltese Government, will look into ways of enhancing such support.

The two also discussed the results of the fact finding report on intra EU relocation from Malta. The report, which was issued by EASO in 2012, and which will feed into the evaluation that the European Commission will conduct once EUREMA II comes to an end, concluded that even though Member States considered intra-EU relocation as a concrete tool for demonstrating intra-EU solidarity, most Member States had mixed views on its protracted use. In general, Member States were in favor of a range of intra-EU solidarity measures, which could include intra-EU relocation, with participation in the latter being voluntary and based on a political decision.

Following the meeting Dr Visser, EASO Executive Director commented that 'Malta is very important for EASO. Apart from being the host country of the agency, the subject matter of the agency is of particular relevance to this country. EASO looks forward to strengthen its relationship with the Maltese Government and to continue to support the Maltese asylum system'

Dr Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, thanked EASO for its work on this sensitive topic and for its role as a neutral player and facilitator and noted the good reputation which EASO has been building in this field.

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@easo.europa.eu