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From:	Polish delegation
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Ministerial Forum for Member States of the Schengen Area with External Land Borders - Information by Poland

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Ministers of Interior and their Deputies from 8 Member States with external land borders of the EU/Schengen (Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Romania and Poland<sup>1</sup>) met on 13-14 May 2014 in Sopot at the invitation of Poland. The meeting was also attended by the Executive Director of Frontex.

This second ministerial meeting was held in the format of the Ministerial Forum for Member States of the Schengen Area with External Land Borders, an informal platform for sectoral cooperation established in the autumn last year in Lappeenranta (Finland), upon the initiative of Finland and Poland.

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<sup>1</sup> Slovakia is also a member of the forum however did not take part in this meeting.

The Ministers discussed the challenges for national systems and policies in the field of internal security, management of migration and external borders, both in the context of current events in Ukraine and in relation to the debates on the further development of the EU Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

The Ministers agreed that the situation in the **Eastern neighbouring countries** requires constant monitoring. **Common initiatives with those countries in the scope of risk analysis developed under the umbrella of Frontex, as well as regional and bilateral tools of cooperation efficiently support situational awareness of the EU.** This awareness can be improved also through a broader use of common immigration liaison officers.

The Ministers concluded that current external developments require them to pull together in a strong manner so as to ensure a coordinated response both in terms of reaction capabilities to possible increase in migration flows and assistance that could be offered to the Eastern neighbouring countries in structural reforms of the system of rule of law with particular attention to law enforcement and border management system.

Also, taking into account the unpredictable situation in Ukraine, the Ministers agreed to exchange information on national strategies, programs and actions in the event of a sudden influx of migrants in the region, and other related matters.

Finally, referring to the priorities for the further development of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, the Ministers underlined the importance of the efficient functioning of the Schengen area and management of the external borders of the EU/ Schengen. In particular update of the Integrated Border Management strategy and a handbook of best practices should be considered in order to take into account the developments of the recent years.

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