



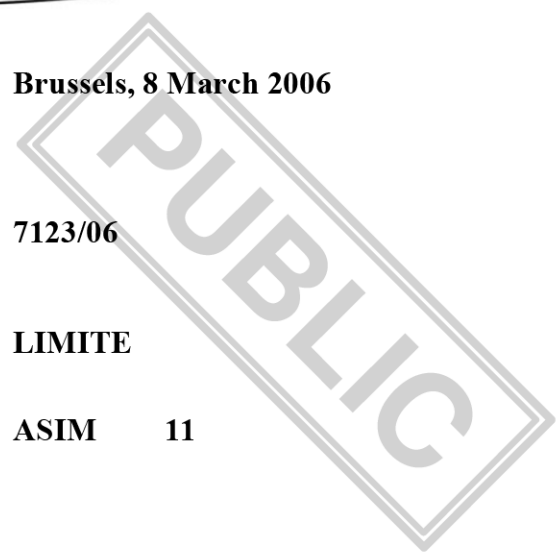
**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 8 March 2006

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NOTE

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| from: | The Presidency |
| to : | Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum |
| Subject : | SCIFA mandate |

1. Coreper decided on the working structures for establishing an area of Freedom, Security and Justice following the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty at its meeting on 17 March 1999. The Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA) was set up as part of a new working structure to prepare the Council's discussions with regard to immigration, frontiers and asylum. The tasks of this Committee, consisting of senior officials, was to issue strategic guidelines in matters relating to immigration, frontiers and asylum, to deal with questions arising from Articles 62, 63 and 64 of the TEC with a view to synthesising and, where necessary, solving them and to give substantive input to Coreper's discussions.
2. SCIFA was initially set up for a five-year transitional period. That mandate was further extended by Coreper on 24 March 2004 for a further period of two years. That further period will expire on 1 May 2006.

3. SCIFA has played an important role in the period since 1999 in coordinating and providing strategic guidance for the work of the working parties active in the areas of immigration, frontiers and asylum and in delivering on those aspects of the Tampere programme and more recently the Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union. The Hague Programme, and the related Commission and Council Action Plan, represent an ambitious programme with the objective, inter alia, of further developing a coordinated policy with regard to asylum, immigration and border controls in the context of the firmer establishment of a common area of freedom, security and justice. The measures for this purpose are to be directed to providing protection in accordance with the Geneva Convention on Refugees and other international treaties to persons in need, regulating migration flows and controlling the external borders of the Union.
4. A substantial work programme remains to be implemented in order for the objectives of the Hague Programme in the area of immigration, frontiers and asylum to be realised. SCIFA will have a key role to play in continuing to provide strategic guidance for the purpose of that work and in preparing for discussions at the level of Coreper and Council.
5. The Presidency therefore proposes that the mandate of SCIFA should be extended for a further period until such time as the overall working structures in the JHA area are reviewed in the light of relevant developments.
