



Conference of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU

CHALLENGES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

**ON THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE CONVENTION
RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES**

**Sofitel Warsaw Victoria Hotel
ul. Królewska 11**

**11–12 July 2011
Warsaw**

Ver 1.4 dated 9 June 2011

1. BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE

The Convention of 28 July 1951 relating to the Status of Refugees is the key legal document in defining who is a refugee, their rights and the legal obligations of states towards refugees. Since it sets out the legal framework for domestic regulations, the Convention plays a crucial role in development of refugee protection systems not only in Europe but also in numerous countries being parties to the document all over the world.

Recognizing the indisputable value and importance of the Convention, the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union has decided to organize a meeting to mark the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the document. The conference entitled “Challenges to the Development of the Common European Asylum System, on the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees” will serve as a forum for an exchange of views on the achievements and weaknesses of asylum protection in Europe and will be an opportunity to discuss the current state of affairs of the CEAS as well as the prospects for its development. During the conference we plan to focus on the challenges to the development of the System, and will then look at the importance of cooperation between state- and non-state actors in establishing of CEAS. These issues are of utmost significance, given the objectives set out in the Stockholm Programme.

Effective achievement of goals set out in the Stockholm Programme will constitute one of the main challenges to the Polish Presidency concerning the Justice and Home Affairs area. Our objective is to facilitate works on the Common European Asylum System while actively seeking and negotiating political agreements on key legislative documents. The Presidency will also vigorously support activities of the European Asylum Support Office. The conference “Challenges to the Development of the Common European Asylum System, on the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees”, not forgetting about its commemorative aim, will surely provide an occasion to stress the need of intra-EU consent leading to the establishment of CEAS by the end of 2012.

Numerous distinguished guests will take part in the conference, including UNHCR representatives, directors general of immigration services from European states, representatives of EU institutions, international and non-governmental organizations dealing with asylum issues, as well as members of academia and judges dealing with refugee law. The conference will be divided into three sessions and each session will consist i.a. of a plenary discussion in the form of an open debate where participants will have an opportunity to discuss themes of significant value to them.

On the following pages you will find a detailed agenda and other relevant logistic information on the conference.

2. PROGRAMME

Simultaneous translation EN/PL will be provided. The conference will take place in the **Belweder Salon** on the first floor of the Sofitel Warsaw Victoria Hotel (please check with the section 3 of this document).

Day 1: 11 July 2011 (Monday)

9:00–10:00 Registration of participants

10:00–10:15 **Conference opening:**

Mr. Jerzy MILLER, Minister of the Interior and Administration, Poland

10:15–10:45 **Keynote addresses:**

Ms. Cecilia MALMSTRÖM, European Commissioner for Home Affairs (tbc)

Mr. Volker TÜRK, Director of International Protection, UNHCR Headquarters

10:45–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–13:00 **Plenary session I:**

60 YEARS OF THE CONVENTION OF 28 JULY 1951 RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES: ACHIEVEMENTS AND WEAKNESSES OF ASYLUM PROTECTION IN EUROPE

Chairman: **Mr. Piotr STACHAŃCZYK**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Poland

Speakers:

Mr. Daniel ENDRES, Director, Bureau for Europe, UNHCR

Prof. Roman WIERUSZEWSKI, Director, Poznan Human Rights Centre, member of the Polish Refugee Board, OSCE Human Rights Expert

Prof. Hélène LAMBERT, University of Westminster

Plenary debate

13:00–13:30 Family photo

13:30–14:30 Lunch

14:30–16:30 **Plenary session II:**

COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM: CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AND PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: **Mr. Dan ELIASSON**, Director-General, Swedish Migration Board

Speakers:

Mr. Stefano MANSERVISI, Director General DG Home Affairs, European Commission (tbc)

Dr. Philippe DE BRUYCKER, Université Libre de Bruxelles, and Odysseus Academic Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe

Dr. Robert Klaas VISSER, Executive Director, EASO

Plenary debate

Please note that an official dinner for conference participants hosted by the Minister of the Interior and Administration is scheduled for 11 July 2011 at 19:30. Details will be distributed in due time.

Day 2: 12 July 2011 (Tuesday)

9:30–10:00 Registration of participants

10:00–10:15 **Opening of the 2nd day of the Conference:**

Mr. Piotr STACHAŃCZYK, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Poland

10:15–12:30 **Plenary session III:**

PRACTICAL COOPERATION ON ASYLUM BETWEEN STATE- AND NON-STATE ACTORS. IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CEAS?

Chairman: **Mr. Rafał ROGALA**, Head of the Office for Foreigners, Poland

Speakers:

Mr. Tomáš HAIŠMAN, Director, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic

Mr. Sebastiaan DE GROOT, President of the International Association of Refugee Law Judges

Dr. Jacek CHLEBNY, Judge of the Supreme Administrative Court of Poland, and President of the Regional Administrative Court in Warsaw

Mr. Bjarte VANDVIK, Secretary General, ECRE

Prof. Irena RZEPLIŃSKA, The Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

Plenary debate

12:30–13:00 **Closing remarks:**

Mr. Piotr STACHAŃCZYK, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Interior and Administration, Poland

13:00–14:00 Lunch



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SIDE EVENT

“60 Years—60 Lives” project commemorating the 60th anniversary of UNHCR

Saski Room, first floor

In 2011, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is commemorating its 60th anniversary and a history inextricably linked to that of Europe following World War II.

Today, millions of Europeans are former refugees or the children and grandchildren of refugees.

The “60 Years—60 Lives” light show will be exhibited in a number of major cities around Europe. In Warsaw, it will be first shown at the asylum conference.

UNHCR and the renowned photo agency Magnum Photos introduce us to 60 persons who have made new lives in exile in the 27 EU Member States as well as Iceland, Norway and Switzerland in the past six decades.

They came from Europe, from Asia, Africa and America, but they have one thing in common: European countries gave them a chance to rebuild their lives in peace and freedom.

3. VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

The conference will be held in the Sofitel Warsaw Victoria Hotel (ul. Królewska 11, Warsaw; tel. +48 22 65 780 11, e-mail: H3378@sofitel.com). The hotel is located in the heart of Warsaw’s Old Town, close to the Grand Theater and Royal Palace. Its apartments overlook the 18th century Saxon Gardens and the famous Pilsudski Square. For more information on the hotel please visit: <http://www.sofitel.com/gb/hotel-3378-sofitel-warsaw-victoria/index.shtml>.



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How to get to the Sofitel Victoria Warsaw Hotel?

- **By car – GPS:** N 52° 14' 24.27" E 21° 0' 47.82".
- **From the airport:** Warsaw Chopin Airport, by bus no 175 (single ticket 2.80 PLN) to “Uniwersytet” or to “Plac Piłsudskiego” (both bus stops: 200 meters on foot from the hotel).
- **From the railway station:** Warszawa Centralna Station, by bus no 201 (ticket 2.80 PLN) to “Zachęta” or by bus no 175 (ticket 2.80 PLN) to “Uniwersytet” or to “Plac Piłsudskiego” (both bus stops: 200 meters on foot from the hotel).
- **By taxi:** approximately 50 PLN from the airport and 25 PLN from the railway station.

Underground station: Świętokrzyska.

You can also check the connections on: <http://warszawa.jakdojade.pl/?locale=en/>.

Conference organizers provide the participants with the possibility of booking rooms in the Sofitel Warsaw Victoria. In order to do this, please use the application form provided with the invitation, fill it in and send to the hotel no later than 27 June 2011.

Participants are free to book accommodation of their choice. We would like to recommend a few hotels situated in the vicinity of the Sofitel Warsaw Victoria Hotel:

- Le Meridien Bristol Hotel, <http://www.lemeridien.pl/en/warsaw>,
- Hotel Gromada Warszawa Centrum, <http://www.h-rzn.com/a373394/index.htm?l=gg>,
- Hotel Harenda, <http://www.hotelharenda.com.pl/>.

Sofitel Warsaw Victoria Hotel

FIRST FLOOR



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4. REGISTRATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

For security reasons, **personal registration** to the conference is mandatory. Participants are kindly requested to complete their accreditation online at

<https://accreditation.pl2011.eu>

between 6 June and 4 July 2011.

Please use the login details provided with the invitation.

To facilitate registration, we request every delegation (if applicable) to appoint one contact person to register the entire delegation. However, it is also possible for each member of the delegation to register using the provided login details. Only a specific number of delegates can register using the login details. The contact person should check whether all members of their delegation have registered in time. Further instructions can be found on the login page.

Should you have any questions about the conference, please contact the organizational team at asylum.conference@mswia.gov.pl or via telephone: +48 22 60 145 52, +48 22 60 139 41. The fax number for the conference is +48 22 60 154 62.