

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

RESPONSE TO FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 0578/16

Diplomatic Telegram report from Berlin to London (13 May 2006)

- The [German] government's firm public line is that both sides should stick to their commitments. Merkel met Juncker and Schulz (together) yesterday in Berlin: all three declared that the EU is not prepared to make any more concessions to Ankara. Juncker said it would be Erdoğan's problem "not mine" to explain to the Turkish people why he would not meet visa conditions. Steinmeier followed suit: "the ball is in Turkey's court".

Diplomatic Telegram report from the UK Representation to the EU in Brussels to London (20 May 2016)

- The Home Secretary represents the UK.
- At the post-Council press conference, the Presidency underlined the Council's view that it was "justifiable" for Greece to return migrants to Turkey.
- The Commission (Avramopoulos)... ..reiterated that no returns had yet been made to Turkey on the basis of a safe third country principle. The Commission had conveyed to the Greek authorities its positive assessment that Turkey should be considered to be a safe third country/safe first country of asylum. Member States should support Greece in achieving this in line with EU and international law.

Diplomatic Telegram report from Ankara to London (5 May 2016)

- On 4 May in its second formal report on Turkey's progress towards securing visa liberalisation by its June target, the European Commission agreed to recommend that Turkey's application be relayed to the Council and Parliament for co-decision vote.

Diplomatic Telegram report from Ankara to London (19 May 2016)

- Visit of Sir Charles Montgomery
- On 16-17 May, Sir Charles Montgomery, Director General, UK Border Force, paid his third visit to Ankara in the last 12 months, to take forward migration and broader JHA issues.
- In Istanbul, Sir Charles met RALON and UKVI teams before seeing ASAM, a Turkish refugee NGO.
- A new proposed tranche of UK bilateral migration projects worth several million pounds was well received.

Diplomatic Telegram report from Pristina to London (10 May 2016)

- On 3 May, UEFA voted, 28-24 to admit Kosovo to UEFA. Kosovo teams will now be able to compete in UEFA competitions.
- On 4 May, the European Commission recommended that the Schengen Group extend Visa Liberalisation to Kosovo. The Schengen group had originally offered Kosovo a Visa Liberation roadmap in 2012...

- The decision will now need to be approved by the Schengen group , and ratified by the European Parliament.
- Whilst in Pristina, Mogherini gave a...speech, noting that Kosovo 'was already Europe', talking about the breadth of the EU's engagement with Kosovo, and that it was in the EU's interests to support Kosovo's efforts, for example, on economic development and anti-corruption. She called for political dialogue within Kosovo. She pressed for the ASMM to be adopted as soon as possible, but in line with Kosovo's laws and respecting the views of Kosovo's Constitutional Court.
- She had meetings with PM Mustafa (jointly with Avramopoulos), as well as separate meetings with President Thaci and Speaker Veseli, and met opposition leaders in front of TV cameras at a reception.

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