Launch of the EU-LAC Structured Dialogue on Migration

On Tuesday 30 June 2009, the European Union and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) formally launched the Structured and Comprehensive bi-regional Dialogue on Migration thus making an important step towards fulfilling the commitments of the V. EU-LAC Summit of Heads of State and Government that was held in Lima, Peru in May 2008.

The launching event was jointly opened by the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the European Communities Ms. Milena Vicenova, the Ambassador of Argentina, Mr. Jorge Remes Lenicov and Mr. Stefano Sannino, Deputy Director General for Latin America and Asia of DG External Relations of the European Commission. LAC Ambassadors as high level EU representatives and senior officials of the European Commission were also present.

The meeting formally adopted the joint document “Basis for Structuring the EU-LAC Dialogue on Migration”. The document outlines the expected structure and content of the Dialogue and includes an indicative calendar of meetings for the coming two years.
The principal objectives of the Dialogue include identification of common challenges and areas for mutual cooperation as well as building a stronger evidence base for EU-LAC migration in order to better understand its realities, based on the principle of shared responsibility, strengthening the commitment and willingness of both sides to discuss migration issues.

In the framework of the Dialogue, parties will exchange views in the following main areas:

- link between migration and development;
- regular migration and irregular migration (e.g. root causes of migration and its mutual benefits for countries of origin and destination);
- migration and the issue of human rights, including protection of migrants in accordance with international obligations;
- the fight against all form of discrimination, racism and xenophobia;
- legislative and administrative measures applicable to migrants in irregular situation;
- issues related to return on a dignified basis and voluntary return.
- measures to combat trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants and the prevention of document fraud.

Progress in the Dialogue will regularly be reported to the EU-LAC Senior Officials Meetings in charge of preparation and follow-up of EU-LAC Summit.

Both Parties welcome the launching of this Dialogue, which will provide a forum for regular exchange of views between both regions on all migration-related issues of mutual interest.