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Malta becomes the 16th member state of ICMPD

Malta, a country right in the centre of the Mediterranean, becomes the 16th member state of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development

Vienna, 14 May – Malta has been at the forefront of migration challenges in the Mediterranean for many years. As a country at the crossroads of Mediterranean cultures Malta has a unique and long-standing history related to the many aspects of migration. It has used this experience to bring the European Union and its African partners together to discuss migration issues at the Valletta Summit of 2015 and the Senior Officials’ Meeting that followed in Malta last year.

At the end of April the Republic of Malta joined the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) as a member state. Malta is the 16th country to join ICMPD, an international migration policy organisation which was founded in 1993 by Switzerland and Austria.

The accession of this most southerly located member state of ICMPD was rendered official through the arrival of the signed instrument of accession at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria. ICMPD has been active in Malta for many years as for instance when organising the first migration conference between Arab and European countries in Malta in 2003. Two years ago ICMPD established the Regional Coordination Office for the Mediterranean in Malta’s capital city, Valletta.

“We are delighted to welcome a new member state to ICMPD which has an outstanding reputation as an active mediator on both sides of the Mediterranean,” announced ICMPD Director General Michael Spindelegger. “Malta has an important role in the Mediterranean and quite a proactive approach in migration matters.”

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, Carmelo Abela, said “Malta has cooperated with ICMPD for a number of years, and this relationship has kept improving over the years. ICMPD Membership was therefore a natural progression. We have therefore now entered a new, more significant, phase and we look forward to a long-lasting and fruitful partnership with the ICMPD and its Member States”.

ICMPD was founded in 1993, on the initiative of Austria and Switzerland, at a time when the migration reality in Europe saw dramatic changes following the political changes in Eastern Europe and the Balkan conflicts. The ranks of its member states saw their first growth in the 1990s with the addition of Hungary (in 1995) and Slovenia (in 1998). The Czech Republic then followed (in 2001), as did Sweden and Portugal (both in 2002) and Bulgaria (in 2003). Croatia and Poland joined next (both in 2004) as well as Slovakia (in 2006). Romania and Serbia were the next to join (in 2011) as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina (in 2012), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (in 2015).

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development is a key player in the migration field. It works with a regional approach in order to create efficient cooperation and partnerships along migration routes. Priority regions include Africa, Central and South Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Its three pillar approach to migration management - structurally linking research, migration dialogues and capacity building – contributes to better migration policy development world-wide. ICMPD has a staff of about 300 people and is active in more than 90 countries worldwide. The Vienna-based organisation has a mission in Brussels, a regional office in Malta and project offices in several countries.

MORE INFORMATION AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS

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