17th Meeting of the Budapest Process Senior Officials

Ankara, Turkey, 17 November 2011

Statement of Mr. Peter Widermann, Director General ICMPD

Final

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all express my appreciation to our Turkish hosts for this important and timely initiative - the 17th Senior Officials Meeting of the Budapest Process.

Today’s meeting aims to take stock of the activities of the last year since November 2010 and to define together the strategic outlook from now to 2013.

It is also my great pleasure to welcome the new participating States (the Silk Routes countries) first time in a Senior Officials Meeting of the Budapest Process as partners in dialogue.

Let me therefore use this opportunity to shortly introduce ICMPD.

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development is an intergovernmental organisation, established in 1993 on initiative of Austria and Switzerland, with actually 14 member states - and some other countries on their way to join. We are based in Vienna with offices in Brussels and various other countries in Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East.

The work of ICMPD is based on a three-pillar approach: Migration Research and Analysis, Migration Dialogues and Capacity building. Combining lessons learned in these
three areas, ICMPD supports its Member States and partners in all areas related to migration.

Soon the Budapest Process will be 20 years in existence. During these 20 years the dialogue has gone through different phases,

Thus, it was suggested to consolidate and streamline the working group structure to be able to concentrate resources on key topics and regions. Three main geographical priority areas were defined as South East Europe, the Black Sea Region and the countries beyond the Black Sea Region i.e. following the historic Silk Routes.

So what has happened since then, during the last one year?

Two working group meetings took place.
The WG meeting of the Black Sea Region with a focus on border guard cooperation was held in February in Sofia.

The first WG meeting of the Silk Routes region was held in June in Nevsehir, Turkey with important conclusions. These give us a number of areas on which we should focus our attention in the next years.

What else? A training programme for 2012 and 2013 was developed targeting all Budapest Process but foremost the Silk Routes countries, which was shared with you before this meeting and on which my colleague Cecilia Lundström will make a presentation later today. We hope to have your support in the realization of this training programme.

The Budapest Process’ focus has further intensified on the Silk Routes Region. After a successful round of consultations, valuable support was received from a number of participating states (Turkey, Switzerland, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and not to
forget Afghanistan), so that in September the ICMPD has started with the implementation of the Silk Routes Project on “Fostering Cooperation in the Area of Migration with and in the Silk Routes Region”. My colleague Sedef Dearing will inform you tomorrow on the details of this project, first results, work plan and priorities for the future.

We have also developed some ideas for future cooperation and projects to be implemented in the Silk Routes Region under the umbrella of the Budapest Process. My colleagues will also inform you on these ideas in detail later.

So all in all it has been a lively year with new ideas coming up and new States joining us and participating in the Process.

We must obviously jointly manage migration, BUT over all we must not forget, that Migration is about people.

Thank you.