



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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from: Italian Delegation  
to: Working Party on Consular Affairs  
Subject: Programme of the Italian Presidency in the field of Consular Affairs  
(COCON) Working Group

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Delegations will find annexed the programme of the Italian Presidency in the field of Consular Affairs (COCON).

Working Programme of the Italian Presidency in the field of Consular Affairs (COCON)

July - December 2014

EU consular cooperation is based on mutual solidarity. A specific Treaty right is established in regard to the provision of consular assistance to unrepresented EU citizens (Article 23 TFEU). As provided for in the Lisbon Treaty, this assistance is based on the principle of non-discrimination. This means that every EU Member State is legally committed to helping any EU citizen whose country has no embassy or consulate in that particular third country, under the same conditions as its own nationals.

The Italian Presidency, together with the Member States, the European External Action Service and the European Commission, will continue to work on maintaining and improving the existing European consular cooperation. In this regard, the work will include further negotiations regarding the legislative framework on consular protection for citizens of the Union abroad and Consular Cooperation Initiatives. In order to make future discussions more effective, a global assessment of Member States' current rules and practices could be envisaged to highlight present shortcomings and potential cost-effective improvements.

Furthermore, the Italian Presidency will continue discussions, coordination and cooperation on:

- joint demarches with the U.S. on international child abduction:

We wish to continue consultations in order to identify third countries where joint demarches with the U.S. on child abduction could be useful. Moreover, we think it is necessary to further develop information-sharing within the EU, in particular regarding data and statistics on international child abduction cases between EU Member States.

- maintaining and further developing the ongoing consular dialogue with the U.S. and Canada.

There will be four COCON meetings as follows: 16 July 2014, 5 September 2014, 19 November 2014 and 16 December 2014.

Finally, the Italian Presidency will organise a meeting/workshop of the Heads of the EU Member States' Crisis Management Units in order to share best practices to protect economic and national interests. The above-mentioned meeting/workshop will be focused on methods to improve the effectiveness of the CoOL system, particularly travel advice coordination between EU Member States.

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