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European Union

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PROPOSAL

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| From: | Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director |
| date of receipt: | 5 March 2015 |
| To: | Mr Uwe CORSEPIUS, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union |
| No. Cion doc.: | COM(2015) 111 final ANNEX 1 |
| Subject: | ANNEX to the Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the short-stay visa waiver |

Delegations will find attached document COM(2015) 111 final ANNEX 1.

Encl.: COM(2015) 111 final ANNEX 1



Brussels, 5.3.2015
COM(2015) 111 final

ANNEX 1

ANNEX

to the

Proposal for a Council Decision

on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the short-stay visa waiver

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Proposal for a Council Decision

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AGREEMENT

between the European Union and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the short-stay visa waiver

THE EUROPEAN UNION, hereinafter referred to as "the Union", and

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, hereinafter referred to jointly as the "Contracting Parties",

WITH A VIEW TO further developing friendly relations between the Contracting Parties and desiring to facilitate travel by ensuring visa-free entry and short stay for their citizens,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU) No 509/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement by, inter alia, transferring 19 third countries, including Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, to the list of third countries whose nationals are exempt from the visa requirement for short stays in the Member States of the European Union (EU),

BEARING IN MIND that Article 1 of Regulation (EU) No 509/2014 states that for these 19 countries, the exemption from the visa requirement shall apply from the date of entry into force of an agreement on visa exemption to be concluded with the European Union,

DESIRING to safeguard the principle of equal treatment of all EU citizens,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that persons travelling for the purpose of carrying out a paid activity during their short stay are not covered by this Agreement and therefore for this category the relevant rules of Union law and national law of the Member States and the national law of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the visa obligation or exemption and on the access to employment continue to apply,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice and the Protocol on the Schengen acquis integrated into the framework of the European Union, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and confirming that the provisions of this agreement do not apply to the United Kingdom and Ireland,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Purpose

This Agreement provides for visa-free travel for the citizens of the European Union and for the citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines when travelling to the territory of the other Contracting Party for a maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day period.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purpose of this Agreement:

(a) "Member State" shall mean any Member State of the European Union, with the exception of the United Kingdom and Ireland;

(b) "a citizen of the European Union" shall mean a national of a Member State as defined in point (a);

(c) "a citizen of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines" shall mean any person who holds the citizenship of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;

(d) "Schengen area" shall mean the area without internal borders comprising the territories of the Member States as defined in point (a) applying the Schengen acquis in full.

Article 3

Scope of application

1. The citizens of the European Union holding a valid ordinary, diplomatic, service, official or special passport issued by a Member State may enter and stay without a visa in the territory of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the period of stay as defined in Article 4(1).

The citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines holding a valid ordinary, diplomatic, service, official or special passport issued by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may enter and stay without a visa in the territory of the Member States for the period of stay as defined in Article 4(2).

2. Paragraph 1 does not apply to persons travelling for the purpose of carrying out a paid activity.

For this category of persons, each Member State individually may decide to impose the visa requirement on the citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines or to withdraw it according to Article 4(3) of Regulation (EC) No 539/2001.

For this category of persons, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may decide on the visa requirement or the visa waiver for the citizens of each Member State individually in accordance with its national law.

3. The visa waiver provided by this Agreement shall apply without prejudice to the laws of the Contracting Parties relating to the conditions of entry and short stay. The Member States and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reserve the right to refuse entry into and short stay in their territories if one or more of these conditions are not met.

4. The visa waiver applies regardless of the mode of transport used to cross the borders of the Contracting Parties.

5. Issues not covered by this Agreement shall be governed by Union law, national law of the Member States and by national law of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Article 4

Duration of stay

1. The citizens of the European Union may stay in the territory of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for a maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day period.
2. The citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may stay in the territory of the Member States fully applying the Schengen acquis for a maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day. This period shall be calculated independently of any stay in a Member State which does not yet apply the Schengen acquis in full.

The citizens of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may stay for a maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day in the territory of each of the Member States that do not yet apply the Schengen acquis in full, independently of the period of stay calculated for the territory of the Member States fully applying the Schengen acquis.

3. This Agreement does not affect the possibility for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Member States to extend the period of stay beyond 90 days in accordance with national law and Union law.

Article 5

Territorial application

1. As regards the French Republic, the provisions of this Agreement shall apply only to the European territory of the French Republic.
2. As regards the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the provisions of this Agreement shall apply only to the European territory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Article 6

Joint Committee for the management of the Agreement

1. The Contracting Parties shall set up a Joint Committee of experts (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee"), composed of representatives of the European Union and representatives of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The Union shall be represented by the European Commission.
2. The Committee shall have, inter alia, the following tasks:
 - (a) monitoring the implementation of this Agreement;
 - (b) suggesting amendments or additions to this Agreement;
 - (c) making recommendations for the settlement of disputes arising from the interpretation or application of the provisions of this Agreement.
3. The Committee shall be convened whenever necessary at the request of one of the Contracting Parties.
4. The Committee shall establish its rules of procedure.

Article 7

Relation between this Agreement and existing bilateral visa waiver agreements between the Member States and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

This Agreement shall take precedence over the provisions of any bilateral agreements or arrangements concluded between individual Member States and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, insofar as their provisions cover issues falling within the scope of this Agreement.

Article 8

Final provisions

1. This Agreement shall be ratified or approved by the Contracting Parties in accordance with their respective internal procedures and shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of the later of the two notifications by which the Contracting Parties notify each other that the procedures referred to above have been completed.
2. This Agreement is concluded for an indefinite period of time, unless terminated in accordance with paragraph 5.
3. This Agreement may be amended by written agreement of the Contracting Parties. Amendments shall enter into force after the Contracting Parties have notified each other of the completion of their internal procedures necessary for this purpose.
4. Each Contracting Party may suspend in whole or in part this Agreement, in particular, for reasons of public policy, protection of national security or protection of public health, illegal immigration or the reintroduction of the visa requirement by either Contracting Party. The decision on suspension shall be notified to the other Contracting Party not later than 2 months before its entry into force. The Contracting Party that has suspended the application of this Agreement shall immediately inform the other Contracting Party once the reasons for suspension no longer exist and shall lift the suspension.
5. Each Contracting Party may terminate this Agreement by giving written notice to the other Party. This Agreement shall cease to be in force 90 days after the date of such notification.
6. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may suspend or terminate this Agreement only in respect of all the Member States.
7. The Union may suspend or terminate this Agreement only in respect of all of its Member States.

Done at Brussels, in duplicate each in the Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish languages, each of these texts being equally authentic.

JOINT DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO ICELAND, NORWAY, SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN

The Contracting Parties take note of the close relationship between the European Union and Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, particularly by virtue of the Agreements of 18 May 1999 and 26 October 2004 concerning the association of these countries with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*.

In such circumstances it is desirable that the authorities of Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, on the one hand, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on the other hand, conclude, without delay, bilateral agreements on the short-stay visa waiver in similar terms as this Agreement.

JOINT DECLARATION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CATEGORY OF PERSONS TRAVELLING FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT A PAID ACTIVITY AS PROVIDED IN ARTICLE 3(2) OF THIS AGREEMENT

Desiring to ensure a common interpretation, the Contracting Parties agree that, for the purpose of this Agreement, the category of persons carrying out a paid activity covers persons entering for the purpose of carrying out a gainful occupation/remunerated activity in the territory of the other Contracting Party as an employee or as a service provider.

This category should not cover:

- businesspersons, i.e. persons travelling for the purpose of business deliberation (without being employed in the country of the other Contracting Party),
- sportspersons and artists performing an activity on an ad-hoc basis,
- journalists sent by the media of their country of residence, and,
- intra-corporate trainees.

The implementation of this Declaration shall be monitored by the Joint Committee within its responsibility under Article 6 of this Agreement, which may propose modifications when, on the basis of the experiences of the Contracting Parties, it considers it necessary.

JOINT DECLARATION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PERIOD OF 90 DAYS IN ANY 180-DAY PERIOD AS SET OUT IN ARTICLE 4 OF THIS AGREEMENT

The Contracting Parties understand that the maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day as provided by Article 4 of this Agreement means either a continuous visit or several consecutive visits, the duration of which does not exceed 90 days in any 180-day period in total.

The notion of "any" implies the application of a moving 180-day reference period, looking backwards at each day of the stay into the last 180-day period, in order to verify if the 90 days in any 180-day requirement continues to be fulfilled. Among others, it means that an absence for an uninterrupted period of 90 days allows for a new stay for up to 90 days.

JOINT DECLARATION ON THE INFORMATION OF THE CITIZENS ABOUT THE VISA WAIVER AGREEMENT

Recognising the importance of transparency for the citizens of the European Union and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Contracting Parties agree to ensure full dissemination of information about the content and consequences of the visa waiver agreement and related issues, such as the entry conditions.