Brussels, 18 November 2011 – The EU needs to boost its relationships with non-EU States to better reap the mutual benefits migration can bring. Although migration is high on the European Union’s political agenda, the Arab spring and events in the Southern Mediterranean in 2011 further highlighted the need for a coherent and comprehensive migration policy for the EU. That is why today the European Commission proposes to strengthen dialogue and operational cooperation with non-EU partner countries in the area of migration and mobility, deepening the proposals contained in the Communication on a Partnership and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean, of 8 May. The new approach is detailed in a renewed ‘Global Approach to Migration and Mobility’ which places mobility of third country nationals at its centre and which makes partnerships more sustainable and forward-looking. Mobility of third country nationals across the external EU borders is important as it applies to a wide range of people, such as short-term visitors, tourists, students, researchers, business people or visiting family members and linked to visa policy.

"We are setting up a strategic policy framework for migration and development which is clear and consistent. The EU will be better equipped for migration governance at home and globally only if it further reinforces its dialogue and cooperation with partner countries. The new EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) represents the strategic framework which is necessary to bring added value to the EU’s and Member States’ action in this area," said Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs.

Priority will now be given to two main operational frameworks:

Firstly, Mobility Partnerships will be offered to the EU's immediate Neighbourhood and to Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt in the first instance. Mobility partnerships offer a concrete framework for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries. These partnerships are focused on facilitating and organizing legal migration, effective and humane measures to address irregular migration, and concrete steps towards reinforcing the development outcomes of migration. Concluding visa facilitation and readmission agreements are to be part of these partnerships.

For other countries, the Commission proposes to set up Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility that will constitute an advanced level of cooperation, based on a number of common recommendations, targets and commitments for dialogue and cooperation.
Migration and Mobility Resource Centers will be set up to provide resources and support to individuals and partner countries in the areas of skills and labour matching. The online EU Immigration Portal launched today will, in addition, help migrants to make more informed choices about migration and mobility towards the EU.

A Global Approach Report will now be prepared every two years, starting from June 2013, in order to monitor implementation and ensure progress.

Background
The new renewed Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) will:

- Be more integrated with EU foreign policy and development cooperation. It is to be jointly implemented by the European Commission, the European External Action Service, including the EU delegations, and the EU Member States.
- Be better aligned with EU's internal policy objectives, notably the Europe 2020 Strategy but also employment and education policies. To ensure prosperity, Europe must become a more attractive destination in the global competition for talent.
- Place a stronger focus on mobility and visa policy.
- Complement the traditional three pillars of the Global Approach - legal migration, irregular migration, and migration and development with a fourth pillar on international protection and the external dimension of asylum policy.
- Make EU action more migrant-centred, with the aim of empowering migrants and strengthening their human rights in countries of origin, transit and destination. Inter-regional migration outside the EU will also be addressed.
- Continue to prioritise EU Neighbourhood, EU-Africa Partnership and countries in the east;
- Identify the concerns and interests the EU shares with its partners and intensify cooperation. Since 2005, approximately 300 migration-related projects in non-EU countries have been funded by the European Commission, amounting to a value of €800 million (see MEMO/11/801 for some concrete examples).

The original Global Approach to Migration was adopted in 2005 and was designed as a policy framework to address all relevant aspects of migration, in a balanced and comprehensive way, in partnership with non-EU countries.

It was evaluated in the first half of 2011 through a broad public consultation which confirmed its usefulness though also highlighted the need for stronger coherence with other policy areas and a better thematic and geographical balance.

Building on six years of experience, the Commission's proposals today also reconfirms the political priorities outlined in the Communications of 4 May (IP/11/532 and MEMO/11/273) and 24 May 2011 (IP/11/629).
For more information

MEMO/11/800: Fostering strategic dialogue and partnership with non EU countries
MEMO/11/801: Concrete examples in the context of the GAMM
IP/11/1370: IP on the EU Immigration Portal

Homepage of Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs

Homepage DG Home Affairs:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/index_en.htm

Contacts:
Michele Cercone  (+32 2 298 09 63)
Tove Ernst  (+32 2 298 67 64)