Speaking points for Bodo Richter at RTD Migration conference, 4 February 2016

Introduction:

Before focusing on the initiatives regarding displaced researchers within the MSCA of Horizon 2020, I would like to mention that Erasmus+ also has elements to help university staff and students in that situation.

My colleagues in DG EAC have collected and published online a list of good practices facilitating the integration of refugees in European universities, and this is being further developed through a survey that is currently open. Erasmus+ provides various opportunities to support the integration of refugees through education, training, youth. The 2016 Erasmus+ Programme Guide puts a special focus on encouraging projects supporting social inclusion (refugees and migrants in particular) and shortly the Online Linguistic Support licences for language assessments and language courses will be available for refugees. More detailed information, including info on the issue of recognition of academic qualifications, are available online through the new "Erasmus+ Helping refugees" webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/higher-education-refugees_en.htm

- The MSCA of the EU Horizon 2020 programme provide high-quality training and career development opportunities in Europe for researchers of any nationality or field, either towards or beyond PhD level.

- The MSCA are fully committed to ensuring that equal opportunities are provided to researchers whose scientific careers have been interrupted, including displaced researchers.

Four MSCA features particularly relevant to displaced researchers:

- **Any time spent applying for refugee status does not affect eligibility for MSCA**

MSCA eligibility criteria are (now) applied in a way that gives an equal chance of funding to displaced researchers, including doctoral candidates, who have suspended their activities while applying for refugee status.

This change is connected to the rules that restrict the amount of time that an MSCA fellow can have been present in the country where he/she wishes to hold a fellowship. As a result, a researcher who has spent time spent applying for refugee status in a Member State or H2020 Associated Country has just the same chance of funding as anyone else.

- **Career Restart Panel (CAR)**

The Actions offer specific support for any post-doctoral researcher who is restarting his/her research career in Europe (CAR panel). Displaced researchers might be particularly interested in this possibility, as they would compete for funding with others who have been absent from research for at least a year.

- **Supporting research training that takes account of displaced researchers' circumstances**

Applicant organisations are being informed that MSCA research training can include the social and professional integration of displaced researchers. 35 MSCA-funded posts have already been advertised on EURAXESS with Science4Refugees status. One of these employers is making
psychological assistance available, while another gives the link to the MSCA webpage for displaced researchers as part of its job advertisements.

- **Promoting MSCA among displaced researchers**

We are trying to reach displaced researchers with information on these opportunities. There is a specific presentation on our website, which will shortly also be available in Arabic. We will ask the organisers of this conference to send the presentation to you.

We have also informed MSCA national contact points about these possibilities and materials, in case they receive such queries.

Promotion of opportunities offered to displaced researchers by MSCA has also been quite successful on social media (7000 people reached and 20 shares).

- **Disseminating information on MSCA projects related to migration and refugees:**

Finally, and mostly closely related to this conference, we have identified 62 research projects funded by the MSCA that relate to issues such as migration, refugees, integration, and conflict resolution. In total these projects have received EUR 20.3 million of funding from the MSCA.

The projects were almost exclusively funded in the framework of the Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC) panel and were undertaken mostly by experienced researchers, beyond PhD level. One of these Fellows is attending today: Dr Sarah Leonard of the University of Dundee in Scotland, who worked on the project: Securitization versus Depoliticization in the European Union Asylum and Migration Policy: The Role of the New Agencies (FRONTEX, EASO & Large-Scale IT Systems Agency).

**Conclusion - Future research priorities (as requested by the organisers):**

In conclusion, it is very relevant here to make a more general point: we do not only want to foster research collaborations between academic institutes and companies, but also to the whole non-academic sector, including public bodies and NGOs.

For example, in March 2016 the MSCA will launch a new Society and Enterprise panel, specifically for post-doctoral fellowships hosted by non-academic organisations. MSCA staff exchanges and doctoral programmes already strongly encourage the participation of the non-academic sector.