Minister participates in MED9 Conference and emphasises protection of borders and effective returns

Organised in Rovinj, Croatia on 18-19 May 2026, the meeting brought together the Ministers of the Interior and Migration of the MED9 Member States, representatives of the European Commission, as well as the European agencies Frontex, Europol and the EUAA. Discussions focused on developments in migration and the strengthening of internal security in the Mediterranean region.

During his intervention, the Greek minister underlined the need for effective protection of the external borders of the European Union, strengthening returns and intensifying European action against migrant smuggling rings. At the same time, he presented the recent initiatives of the Greek government to tighten the return framework and accelerate asylum procedures.

In the meeting, particular emphasis was placed on cooperation with third countries, on strengthening the external dimension of European migration policy, and on the need to develop so-called innovative practices, including return hubs outside the European Union.

On the sidelines of the MED9 Conference, the Minister held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of the Interior of Croatia to discuss the coordination of frontline states against migratory pressures in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, the strengthening of cooperation to tackle trafficking networks, and the need to formulate a common European stance on potential new migratory flows linked to developments in the Middle East.

Another meeting was held with the Minister of the Interior of Italy, during which the common challenges faced by the Mediterranean countries, the implementation of the new European Pact on Migration and Asylum, and the need to strengthen operational cooperation to prevent illegal migration flows from Libya, were discussed. The meeting was part of the enhanced coordination between Greece and Italy on migration, following the recent joint statement by the leaders of Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Malta in Costa Navarino on the need for a unified European response to potential migratory pressures in the Mediterranean.

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