Joint press release following the trilateral ministerial meeting of Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey in Sofia

On 24 June 2025, the Minister of Interior of Bulgaria, Mr Daniel Mitov, hosted the Minister of Migration and Asylum of Greece, Mr Mavroudis Voridis, and the Minister of Interior of Türkiye, Mr. Ali Yerlikaya, on the occasion of the second Ministerial trilateral meeting in Sofia.

The first meeting took place in Istanbul on 14 January 2025, following an agreement to meet regularly at the political level to discuss recent developments and trends in migration, assess the results of cooperation and reconfirm the commitments towards the trilateral dialogue and collaboration in countering irregular migration and trans-border crime.

Building on the mutual trust and driven by their willingness to sustain the high-level dialogue, the ministers exchanged views on the impact of the migration situation in the region and beyond, including the latest challenges of irregular migration they face and the need to further strengthen their efforts to more effectively address criminal networks. The ministers emphasised the importance of border management, prevention of illegal migration, partnership with countries of origin along the route and effective return policy. Enhanced operational cooperation including timely information exchange was identified as central. The ministers recognised the role of their political cooperation for the security in the region and confirmed their willingness to contribute to it.

The Minister of Interior of Bulgaria highlighted the strategic importance of the trilateral political format as a platform for enhanced regional dialogue and result-oriented cooperation. He underlined the sustainability of the professional collaboration between Bulgaria, Greece and Türkiye resulting in high level of border security, more robust countering of illegal migration and tangible results in combating migrant smuggling networks. He presented the current migratory situation emphasizing the measures at national level, the increased resources invested and the cooperation with the partners. Bulgaria will continue to be a strong and reliable partner in the regional and European efforts to ensure border security and provide an effective response to the challenges related to illegal migration, trans border crime and terrorist threats.

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The Minister of Migration and Asylum of Greece expressed his appreciation on the level of the trilateral cooperation that has provided tangible results at the land borders but lately also at the seaborne borders. He informed his fellow ministers on the challenges that Greece is facing in terms of illegal arrivals and underlined the resolve of the Greek Government to continue the fight against the criminal smuggling networks. Furthermore, Mr Voridis informed his colleagues of the priority that is now given to the creation of an effective return system to the countries of origin in Greece but also in Europe and emphasized the willingness of the Greek Government to pursue a more restrictive policy on migration.

The Minister of Interior of Türkiye emphasised the measures and cooperation steps taken in the context of combating irregular migration and emphasized the high success achieved in this regard. He stated that with the deterrence provided, Turkey has ceased to be a target country for irregular migration flows, and that the tripartite mechanism between Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria has also made significant contributions within this framework. He underlined that since migrant smuggling, which is one of the biggest factors in irregular migration, is also one of the most important sources of income for terrorist and organized crime organizations, the fight against these crimes cannot be considered separately. He stated that cooperation between the three countries should be deepened in the fight against terrorist and organized crime organizations as well as irregular migration. Bulgaria, Greece and Türkiye share a common understanding that the migration challenges can be effectively managed only through open dialogue and coordinated efforts, and in a manner, that ensures national and regional security. The Ministers agreed that the meetings in this format should continue as they provide impetus for further strengthening the professional cooperation and contribute to overall security of the citizens of Bulgaria, Greece and Türkiye.

Source(s)

- Ministry of Migration and Asylum | Υπουργείο Μετανάστευσης και Ασύλου (24 June, 2025), Μάκης Βορίδης από την τριμερή Ελλάδας – Βουλγαρίας – Τουρκίας στη Σόφια: «Θωράκιση συνόρων και σαφές μήνυμα προς τους λαθροδιακινητές: Ο έλεγχος των συνόρων ανήκει ξανά στα κράτη» [Makis Voridis from the tripartite meeting of Greece – Bulgaria – Turkey in Sofia: "Strengthening of borders and a clear message to human traffickers: The control of borders belongs once again to the states."],

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https://migration.gov.gr/en/makis-voridis-apo-tin-trimeri-elladas-voylgarias-toyrkias-sti-sofia-thorakisi-synoron-kai-safes-minyma-pros-toys-lathrodiakinites-o-elegchos-ton-synoron-anikei-xana-sta-kra/

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