

**COMMON DECLARATION
BY ROMANIA AND BULGARIA
ON THE ACCESSION TO THE SCHENGEN AREA**

Taking into account

Romania and Bulgaria's accession to the European Union on January 1st, 2007 as well as the provisions of art. 4 (2) of the *Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union*,

The high level of bilateral co-operation in specific matters,

Reaffirming

Their determination to share the common responsibility for strengthening the area of security, freedom and justice,

Interested

In strengthening the Romanian-Bulgarian partnership in the field of home affairs and in adding new dimensions to the specific co-operation needed for preparing the two countries' accession to the Schengen area,

Bearing in mind

The *Declarations of readiness* presented by the two countries, stating that Romania and Bulgaria confirm their preparedness for the opening of Schengen evaluations,

The common goal of joining the Schengen area,

Being convinced

Of the successful finalization of the challenging preparation for the full integration of our countries into the Schengen area, to be confirmed by the Council Decision relating to the lifting of checks at the internal borders,

Romania and Bulgaria

Have determined March 2011 as their common strategic term for full participation in the Schengen area.

The two countries

Shall closely co-operate in order to achieve a maximum degree of harmonization in the preparatory works for their integration into Schengen area,

Shall co-ordinate their actions during Schengen evaluations and shall notify each other of any facts that might lead to a delay in their preparations for the full Schengen acquis implementation,

Shall work closely with the current Slovenian and future French Presidency of the EU Council towards the successful implementation of the Multi-annual Working Program of the SCHEVAL Working Party.