Establishing a European Asylum Support Office

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The Council discussed the **state of play** of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In particular, it took note of the agreement reached between the European Parliament and the Council on the establishment of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the related changes to the European Refugee Fund (ERF). This agreement opens the way for the relevant legislative instruments to be adopted in the near future.

Following a lunch discussion, the Presidency reported that agreement had been reached on Valetta, Malta as the seat of EASO. This agreement will be formalised in the near future.

The support office is aimed at improving the implementation of the Common European Asylum System, strengthening practical cooperation among member states on asylum and as providing and coordinating operational support to member states facing specific and disproportionate pressures on their national asylum systems. The ERF needs to be amended as the office will take over responsibility for certain operations that have until now been financed by the refugee fund.