

Resolution on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa

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The Commission presented a communication on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean set up following the Lampedusa disaster which involved the sinking of a boat with around 500 migrants on board off the coast of Lampedusa (5 October 2013).

The loss of human lives triggered a strong call for action from European leaders and European citizens. The EU called for determined action to be taken in order to prevent deaths at sea and to prevent such human tragedies from happening again. This action would be targeted at the provision of protection, guided by the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility with a strong external oriented component.

In light of this, after the tragedy of Lampedusa, the Foreign Affairs Council of 18 November 2013 discussed ways to strengthen political dialogue and cooperation with third countries. The European Parliament also adopted a resolution on this subject on the 23 of October.

Necessary measures: during the discussion at the meetings of the Task Force and on the basis of the mandate, it emerged that a comprehensive range of measures must be used following an integrated approach for the whole Mediterranean area.

They include, among other areas:

- assistance and reinforced dialogue with countries of origin and transit in line with the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility;
- a renewed focus on resettlement and regional protection efforts; legal channels to safely access the European Union to be explored, as well as a general focus on increased resettlement efforts;
- the fight against trafficking and smuggling of human beings and criminal networks;
- ensuring a speedy and sustainable return of migrants in a humane and dignified manner;
- strengthening the management of the EU's external borders;
- implementation of the recently adopted Eurosur Regulation;
- the support to Member States facing pressure on their migration and asylum systems.

The actions contained in this communication follow this holistic approach, while focusing on **immediate and practical solutions** that could complement ongoing activities in the whole of the Mediterranean in the short term.

Five main areas of action emerged from the Task Force discussions with a wide geographical scope: from the countries of origin and transit, to prevent migrants from undertaking dangerous journeys, to the shores of the European Union:

- (1) Actions in cooperation with third countries;
- (2) Regional protection, resettlement and reinforced legal avenues to Europe;
- (3) Fight against trafficking, smuggling and organised crime;

(4) Reinforced border surveillance contributing to enhancing maritime situational picture and to the protection and saving of lives of migrants in the Mediterranean;

(5) Assistance and solidarity with Member States dealing with high migration pressure.

Immediate measures will need to be complemented by **long-term initiatives**, grounded on the best available research, aimed at addressing the root causes of migration (poverty, human rights violations, conflict, lack of economic opportunities, poor working conditions, unemployment, etc).

Initiatives should also be taken to **reform the legal and administrative framework on migration and asylum** in countries of transit. Any EU action must be seen in the wider political context of the EU relationship with respective partner countries and regions: it notably cannot be isolated from the European Neighbourhood Policy and from the external migration policy framework of the [Global Approach to Migration and Mobility](#) (GAMM).

It should be noted that all actions under this communication will have to be fully compliant with international human rights standards (Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, etc) and to the applicable provisions as regards the protection of data protection.

Follow-up: in the follow-up to this communication, appropriate consideration should be given to the **resources and assets that could be made available**, within the existing budget constraints, by all actors involved in order to implement the actions and achieve the overall objective of preventing tragedies such as Lampedusa from happening again in the future.

The European Commission should regularly report to the Council and the European Parliament on progress made on the implementation of the TFM communication.