Resolution on migrants on the island of Lampedusa in Italy and their expulsions to Libya

2005/2547(RSP) - 02/06/2005

The Council approved a series of conclusions on EU cooperation with Libya on migration issues.

In particular, the Council:

- shares the Commission's assessment that there is a need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to migration in the Mediterranean which encompasses dialogue and cooperation with Libya, other Mediterranean partners and main African countries of origin and transit, in full compliance with the objectives of the strategic framework established by the European Neighbourhood Policy referred to in the Hague Programme for the external dimension of asylum and migration;

- underlines that cooperation between the EU and third countries is guided by the principles of full respect for human rights, respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and the demonstration by those countries of a genuine commitment to fulfil their obligations under the Geneva Convention on Refugees or other relevant international conventions;

- calls on the Libyan authorities to demonstrate a genuine commitment to fulfil their obligations under the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa which recognises that the Geneva Convention on Refugees constitutes the basic and universal instrument relating to the status of refugees and which requires effective cooperation with the UNHCR and the respect of the principle of 'non-refoulement'. Invites the Commission to explore ways in which the Libyan authorities could be assisted in fulfilling their obligations;

- agrees to launch an ad hoc dialogue on migration issues between the EU and Libya and to gradually develop concrete cooperation on such issues with the Libyan authorities. The extent and development of such a cooperation will depend on Libya's commitments on asylum and fundamental rights as stated above;

- invites the Commission to engage, on the basis of the suggestions contained in the Annex and as soon as possible, in exploratory discussions with the Libyan authorities to identify practical measures to tackle illegal migration in areas such as training, reinforcement of institution building, asylum issues and increasing public awareness of the dangers of illegal migration, and to discuss the conditions under which such cooperation could take place;

- invites the Commission to report on the outcome of its exploratory discussions with the Libyan authorities in order for the Council to consider further action;

- stresses that as long as Libya does not fully integrate into the Barcelona process, any cooperation with Libya can only be limited in scope and take place on a technical ad hoc basis;

- calls upon the Commission to extend this cooperation to the main countries of origin and transit on the African continent in close relation with the relevant regional organisations to develop a wider approach to migration management on the African continent;

- calls upon the Member States and the Commission to implement swiftly the measures listed in the Annex, and calls upon the Member States to intensify, in particular in the framework of the European

Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, their cooperation on maritime external borders in the Mediterranean area and invites the Agency to include among its priorities in the working programme for 2005 and 2006 concrete operational actions on this issue;

- invites the Commission to provide regular reports on progress in cooperation with the main African countries of origin and transit and in the implementation of the measures to intensify cooperation within the EU.