

« Addressing Refugee and Migrant Movements: the Role of EU External Action »

Joint report Ms Valenciano (AFET) and Mr Diaz de Mera (DEVE)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 3, 8 and 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and to Articles 80, 208 and 216 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy published in June 2016,
- having regard to the European Commission Communications on: “A European Agenda on Migration”¹ of 13 May 2015; “Addressing the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Role of EU External Action”² of 9 September 2015; “Forced Displacement and Development”³ of 26 April 2016; ‘establishing a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration’⁴ of 7 June 2016, and ‘Strengthening European Investments for jobs and growth: Towards a second phase of the European Fund for Strategic Investments and a new European External Investment Plan’ of 14 September 2016⁵,
- having regard to the General Affairs Council Conclusions on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) of 3 May 2012,
- having regard to the European Council Conclusions on migration of 25-26 June, 15 October, 17-18 December 2015 and 17-18 March and 28 June 2016,
 - having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on migration in EU development cooperation of 12 December 2014, on migration of 12 October 2015, on the EU approach to forced displacement and development of 12 May 2016 and on external aspects of migration of 23 May 2016,
- having regard to the Declaration of the High-Level Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean/Western Balkans route of 8 October 2015,
- having regard to the Political Declaration and Action Plan of the Valletta Summit of 11-12 November 2015,

1 COM (2015) 240 final

2 JOIN (2015) 40 final

3 COM (2016) 234 final

4 COM (2016) 385 final

5 COM (2016) 581 final

- having regard to the European Court of Auditors Special Report (9/2016) on “EU external migration spending in Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Neighbourhood countries until 2014”,
- having regard the UN Convention and protocol relating to the Status of Refugees - to the core international human rights conventions, as well as to the European Convention of Human Rights and to the European Charter of Fundamental Rights,
- having regard to the outcome document of the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development of 25 September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,
 - having regard to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants of 19 September 2016 and its annexes on a ‘Comprehensive refugee response framework’ and ‘Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration’,
- having regard to previous European Parliament resolutions, notably those of 9 July 2015 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy⁶, of 8 March 2016 on the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU, of 12 April 2016 on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration⁷,
- having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas human mobility is at an unprecedentedly high level, with 244 million international migrants, due to various reasons including the doubling in the world’s population since 1960; whereas international migration occurs primarily within the same region and between developing countries;
 - B. whereas 65 million people – including 40.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 21.3 million refugees – are forcibly displaced because of conflicts, violence and human rights violations, further to people displaced due to natural disasters;
 - C. whereas this challenge requires global solutions but 86% of the world’s refugees live in developing regions, with least developed countries hosting 26% of the total; whereas the million people which arrived in the EU in 2015 represented 0.2% of the EU population, compared to much higher percentages in neighbouring countries;-
 - D. whereas refugees and migrants are legally two distinct categories but in reality often people are part of large-scale mixed movements of people – with political, economic,

⁶ Texts adopted, P8_TA (2015)0272.

⁷ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0102

social, developmental, humanitarian and human rights implications that cut across borders;-

- E. whereas vulnerable people, particularly women, and also children, people with disabilities, people in need of urgent medical treatment and the elderly, who are specially exposed to all kinds of dangers, namely violence, trafficking and abuse should be urgently protected and granted humanitarian protection as a complement to resettlement.

- F. whereas the increase in human mobility done in a safe, orderly, regular and responsible manner, can provide important benefits, as recognised by Agenda 2030, but which are often largely underestimated; whereas the ageing of the European population requires, among others, to resort to foreign workforce in order to guarantee an adequate balance between active and retired people;

A comprehensive and principled EU action to respond to mobility challenges

1. Underlines that we are witnessing in today's world an unprecedented level of human mobility and that one of the most urgent actions the international community must urgently undertake is the strengthening of a common response to address the challenges and opportunities that this phenomenon represents; stresses that this response must be guided by the full protection of the rights and dignity of everyone forced by any circumstance to flee their homes in search of a better life, ; underlines that, though their treatment is governed by separate legal frameworks, refugees and migrants have the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, which need to be safeguarded regardless of their status; recalls that the EU shall abide by its values and principles in all common policies and promote them in its external relations.

2. Stresses that well-managed international migration represents an important contribution to socioeconomic development, as it has been historically, and that it is necessary to encourage this by changing the current narrative and developing a positive one, countering xenophobic, populist and nationalistic discourses, and adopting policies focussed on the medium and long term and not exclusively guided by immediate political pressures, whilst also addressing legitimate concerns regarding border management, social protection for vulnerable groups, or integration of refugees and migrants;

3. Recognises that the humanitarian aid system is dangerously overstretched and that it will never be sufficient to respond to forced displacement crises, notably given the protracted nature of a majority of them; welcomes therefore the new policy framework outlined in the Commission communication on "Forced Displacement and Development" of April 2016; notes the importance of promoting closer humanitarian-development links, and the need to engage with different partners – governments, local

authorities, civil society including refugees themselves, and the private sector – to develop targeted evidence-based strategies to tackle this challenge;

4. Stresses that EU development cooperation should continue to address the root causes of forced displacement by promoting peace democracy and security, reducing poverty and inequality, strengthening basic services, addressing state fragility and promoting human rights and good governance, in line with SDG 16 in the new 2030 Agenda;
5. Stresses the crucial role of women with regards to forced displacement, not only as being more vulnerable to certain abuses, but also in regards to the role they play in responding to emergencies, their socioeconomic contributions and their active participation in conflict resolution and prevention; notes that a focus on women empowerment is therefore necessary to address the deeper causes of forced displacement; reminds the importance of adding a gender perspective to the EU policies addressing migrants and refugees movements;
6. Recalls that children – particularly unaccompanied ones –, people with disabilities and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to abuses, including sexual and gender based violence, even once they have reached places deemed secure; calls, for these groups to be given special assistance and humanitarian protection as a complement to resettlement;

A better-managed international migration: a global responsibility

7. Welcomes the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016 and the holding of the Leaders' Summit hosted by the USA as migration flows are a global responsibility which demands a global response and enhanced cooperation between all stakeholders; welcomes the outcome of these summits as the expression of a political commitment of unprecedented force, initiating the path towards a truly international sharing of responsibilities for refugees and large migrant movements; regrets however the lack of specific pledges or legally binding commitments for aid or reform, needed to close the current gap between rhetoric and reality; calls on all the parties involved to provide continued political engagement, funding and concrete acts of solidarity in support of host countries; calls on the EU and Member States to take the lead in the international efforts, particularly to ensure that the agreements -including the future compacts on refugees and on a safe, orderly and regular migration - are swiftly put into practice, establishing follow-up mechanisms as needed;
8. Underlines that the resettlement of forced displaced persons is a responsibility of the international community; considers that it is urgent to implement a coordinated response in third countries to grant asylum for people in need of international protection, instead of leaving the burden to the front-line states or countries neighbouring conflict zones;

highlights that financial support is outpaced by the scope and the scale of displacement and the lack of solutions to address root causes of forced displacement;

9. Stresses nonetheless the need to find political solutions to violent conflicts and to invest in early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms to reduce them in the future; asks for a more active and effective role of the EU in the field of prevention and mediation; highlights that the response to forced displacement needs to be rights-based and take account of the population's vulnerabilities – notably women and minors – and not be limited to humanitarian assistance but also involve development actors;

The EU external action and partnerships with third countries

10. Stresses that the EU external action should be forward-looking instead of mainly reactive with changes of objectives due to new crises; recalls that the migration phenomenon stems from a complex set of causes, such as human development, poverty, insufficient job creation, political instability and climate change;
11. Calls for the establishment of a genuine, value-based European Common migration policy – with adequate legal channels for migration as a sustainable long-term policy to promote growth and cohesion within the EU – in order to set a clear framework in the EU relations with third countries; welcomes the EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling (2015-2020), which envisages closer cooperation with third countries, but underlines that the implementation of a common EU legal migration policies would be instrumental in breaking the business model of smugglers;
12. Welcomes the new Partnership Framework with third countries as a signal of real political action; stresses that the success of the approach outlined in the June 2016 Communication depends on the EU's capacity to offer real and commonly agreed incentives to third countries and is preoccupied by the limited offer mainly focussed on border management or Assisted Voluntary Return schemes, which – while essential and needed – constitute only a partial response to the situation; highlights the need to balance and complement this response focussing on the development of local economies, qualification and regional mobility and the improvement of protection levels in countries of transit and origin.
13. Expresses concerns regarding the quantitative approach in the new Partnership Framework and the related 'migration compacts', which sees the "measurable increases in the number and rate of returns" as one of the main EU's goal, as the number of returns clearly depends on the nature of migration flows and on the situations in the countries of origin; stresses that the short-term objectives of the compacts should focus on how best to address the challenges faced by third countries, including by developing

legal migration channels, as a result of which the levels of irregular migration and death tolls in the Mediterranean will decrease;

14. Welcomes the high-level dialogues carried out by the VP/HR and the Commission, and in some cases by Member States on behalf of the EU as a whole, as good and efficient practices fostering coordination; underlines that coordination should be undertaken by the Commission and the EEAS; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to keep the European Parliament regularly informed of these dialogues and to report on the exact operational implementation of the Rabat and Khartoum processes and the priority initiatives agreed at the Valletta Summit ; notes that the packages designed for priority countries as part of the new Partnership Framework, by the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States have not been presented neither debated by elected representatives of European citizens;
15. Notes that, fulfilling the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires the EU and partners countries to integrate well-managed migration dynamics into their respective sustainable development strategies;
16. Is extremely preoccupied by the continuation of the conflict in Syria, in which violence against civilians and violations of international humanitarian law during the past five years have led to the forced displacement of half of the country; expresses its full support to Lebanon and Jordan, which continue to demonstrate an extraordinary solidarity hosting millions of refugees in spite of limited resources;

Appropriate means for actions

17. Supports the Commission's proposal for a new and ambitious External Investment Plan (EIP) in order to mobilise investments in developing third countries; considers that supporting private sectors in third countries while fostering good governance and business practices and environment should not be presented as a new measure; calls on the Commission to ensure coherence between financing instruments -for example with the Development cooperation Instrument (DCI) and EDF- and projects in order to focus the EU assistance on priorities and avoid the scattering of funds and efforts;

18. Underlines that without sufficient funding, the EU cannot perform the functions it is expected for, nor meet the expectations of the European people; underlines the political and economic costs of inaction; notes that the mid-term revision of the MFF –, or the negotiation of the next MFF at the latest –, provides a necessary opportunity for the revision of the external instruments related to migration, and also to increase the EU's budget in such manner that it allows the end of ad hoc instruments and restores the unity of budget;

19. Notes that the creation of Trust Funds and ad hoc financial instruments, whilst helping to mobilise necessary resources and bringing flexibility to EU action, also undermines the unity of budget and the European Parliament's budgetary authority; calls therefore for the Parliament's greater involvement in supervision of these instruments - including by being part of Steering Boards; recalls that efficiency of Trust Funds heavily depends on the readiness to contribute by Member States and their full involvement.

20. Welcomes the use of CSDP missions such as EUCAP SAHEL Niger and EUNAVFOR MED, cooperation with NATO, and EU initiatives such as Europol's Joint Operational Team (JOT) Mare to gather intelligence and fight smugglers, while underlining that global mobility should not be considered a threat; recommends the use of CSDP tools for early warning (forecasting), mediation and conflict resolution while stressing the importance to start planning for durable solutions as early as possible in conflict situations;

21. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to provide Parliament and the public with a detailed overview of the various funding instruments and programmes – and their articulation with Member States' programmes – in the 16 priority countries⁸ with which the EU undertakes high level dialogues on migration, and under the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM); recalls that the GAMM remains the overarching framework of the EU external migration and asylum policy but notes that recent policy initiatives have made limited reference to it and calls for a clarification of the GAMM's relevance in the current context; .

22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the Governments of the 16 priority countries identified in the new partnership framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration.

⁸ Ethiopia, Eritrea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan