



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 22 September - 3 October 2014**

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#### **EU Statement for Working Session 17: Refugees and Displaced Persons**

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Mister/Madame Chairperson,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union and report on the situation of refugees and displaced persons within the OSCE Area, to which the European Union remains fully committed.

The European Union has paid increased attention to international protection and it is in the frontline for its commitment to assist people potentially entitled to international protection status *under the 1951 convention*, in a spirit of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility among Member States in compliance with article 80 of the Treaty on Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and its effective implementation. Following the tragedy off the coasts of Lampedusa last October 2013, the EU has put in place relevant efforts to avoid the loss of human lives in the Mediterranean and to improve its capacity to assist asylum-seekers and refugees. The European Council set up the “Task Force for the Mediterranean” responsible for the identification of targeted actions in response to the humanitarian tragedy in the Mediterranean. Said Task Force has identified a number of priorities which have now become the centerpieces of the EU action in the area.

In particular, the European Council conclusions of 26-27 June 2014 focused on the enhancement of Frontex, as an instrument of European solidarity in the area of border management, reinforcing its operational assistance, “to support Member States facing strong pressure at the external borders, and increase its reactivity towards rapid evolutions in migration flows, making full use of the new European Border Surveillance System EUROSUR”.



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The full implementation of the Common European Asylum System is a paramount challenge the EU is currently confronted with, for the purpose of its uniform application of the *acquis* across Europe, also through a reinforced role for the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). There is also a growing consensus among EU Members States to renew efforts to foster Regional Protection Programs and increase contributions to global resettlement, in close collaboration with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in order to support third Countries most exposed to massive inflows of displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers.

Dialogue with countries of origin and transit of the migratory flows is the key. The EU is developing such dialogue through the instruments provided for within the Global Approach to migration and Mobility: Mobility partnerships, Regional Processes and Dialogues, Regional Protection Programs. Issues such as the management of migration flows and the fight against trafficking in human beings should have a priority. In this regard, the European Union and the African Union are exploring a possible mechanism aimed at strengthening relations with the Horn of Africa and Mediterranean transit countries in the field of migration. In particular, European Union and African Union presented an EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (EU-HoAMRI), with the participation of all relevant countries - including Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, Sudan, Egypt - plus the International Organization for Migration and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, aimed at establishing a long-standing dialogue on migration and mobility in order to enhance the current cooperation and identify and implement concrete projects. In this first phase activities should concentrate on addressing trafficking of human beings.

In this regard, we remain fully committed in implementing the relevant Decisions adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council held in Ljubljana and Athens. Bearing in mind the different approaches to migration issues by the OSCE participating States, and drawing from their experiences and best practices, we encourage all the



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Participating States and Partners to foster cooperation to manage migration in order to promote the respect of international humanitarian law and of the rights of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers as well as of all the citizens of the OSCE region.

Thank you for your attention

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ARMENIA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.