



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

27.4.2015

B8-0377/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the European Council and the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the report of the extraordinary European Council (23 April 2015), including the latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies (2015/2660(RSP))

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on behalf of the EFDD Group

B8-0377/2015

European Parliament resolution on the report of the extraordinary European Council (23 April 2015), including the latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies (2015/2660(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1951 and the additional protocols thereto,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 December 2014¹ on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 October 2013² on EU and Member State measures to tackle the flow of refugees as a result of the conflict in Syria,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2013 on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa³,
- having regard to the speech by the President of the European Parliament during his visit to Lampedusa on 2 and 3 October 2014 to mark the anniversary of the tragedy of 3 October 2013,
- having regard to the reports of its Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the visits by its delegations to Lampedusa in November 2011, to Jordan on refugees from Syria in February 2013, and to Bulgaria on the situation of asylum seekers and refugees, in particular from Syria in January 2014,
- having regard to the debates in its plenary session of 9 October 2013 on EU migratory policies in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa,
- having regard to the debates held, since the beginning of the current legislature, in its Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on 22 July 2014 on the implementation of the communication on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean; on 4 September 2014 on Frontex activities in the Mediterranean and on the Task Force Mediterranean; on 24 September 2014 on the Commission's 5th annual report on

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0105.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0414.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0448.

- immigration and asylum (2013)(3) and on the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) annual report on the situation of asylum in the European Union (2013),
- having regard to the Commission communication on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean of 4 December 2013,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 20 December 2013,
 - having regard to the Commission working document of 22 May 2014 on the implementation of the communication on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean,
 - having regard to the conclusions adopted by the European Council at its meeting of 26-27 June 2014, in which it defined the strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning for the coming years within the area of freedom, security and justice,
 - having regard to the Opinion of the European Economic and Social committee on European immigration policies of 11 September 2014,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on taking action to better manage migratory flows, adopted on 10 October 2014,
 - having regard to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) April 2012 report ‘Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea’,
 - having regard to the annual reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, in particular the report, published in April 2013, on the management of the EU’s external borders and its impact on the human rights of migrants and the report, published in April 2014, on labour exploitation of migrants,
 - having regard to the address by His Holiness Pope Francis during his visit to Parliament on 25 November 2014,
 - having regard to the questions to the Council and to the Commission on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration (O-000078/2014 – B8-0037/2014 and O-000079/2014 – B8-0038/2014),
 - having regard to the debate on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration held in Parliament on 25 November 2014,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the latest tragedy off the Libyan coast left at least 800 migrants dead, with many more missing;
- B. whereas, according to the International Organisation for Migration, since 2000 at least 22 400 people are estimated to have lost their lives in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe, making it the deadliest sea in the world for migrants, pointing once more to the need to do everything possible to save the lives of people in danger and to the need for Member States to abide by their international sea-rescue obligations;

- C. whereas the Mare Nostrum patrolling rescue and surveillance operation launched by Italy has enhanced the humanitarian rescue activities in the Mediterranean, rescuing 150 810 migrants during the last 364 days of operation; whereas the assumption that the termination of Mare Nostrum would reduce the number of migrants willing to undertake the Mediterranean crossing and die in the attempt was mistaken;
- D. whereas the Triton joint operation coordinated by Frontex became fully operational on 1 November 2014; whereas the mandate limits the operation to patrolling and border control, and search and rescue operations are thus not part of it; whereas Triton covers an area of activity of just 30 miles from a fraction of the European shores; whereas Triton has limited financial and technical means compared with Mare Nostrum; whereas, without modifying its mandate, tripling the budget of Triton, as decided by the European Council on Thursday, 23 April 2015, will not reduce the number of migrants dying at sea;
- E. whereas the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility is laid down in Article 80 TFEU;
1. Expresses deep sadness and regret at the tragic loss of life in the Mediterranean; recalls that EU solidarity should go hand in hand with responsibility; recalls that the migration issue should be addressed by putting human dignity at the core of any analysis and possible solution;
 2. Urges the European Union and the Member States to do more to prevent further loss of life at sea, and urges the Member States to use their prerogative to rescue lives at sea in accordance with their international obligations; calls for the establishment of a major search and rescue operation from Cyprus to Spain with enough financial, technical and human resources, coordinated at EU level;
 3. Calls for the adoption of a coordinated approach based on solidarity and responsibility to find a European solution to this major European structural issue – this solution should be based on solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, as stated in Article 80 TFEU, and on a holistic approach that takes into account all dimensions of the issue, including introducing new safe and legal migration channels, humanitarian visas, mandatory resettlement programmes for Member States, and cooperation with third countries, which would also have positive effects on internal security;
 4. Calls on Member States to take measures to enable asylum seekers to access the Union asylum system in a safe and fair manner and not risk their lives in doing so; calls for humanitarian assistance for survivors of such tragic events, and asks that the EU and the Member States be committed to guaranteeing migrants' universal fundamental rights;
 5. Acknowledges that between half a million and one million people might try to cross the Mediterranean in the coming months; calls on the EU and the Member States to consider options for organising an emergency relocation mechanism and a binding mechanism to reduce the pressure on those Member States receiving higher numbers of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, so as to properly deal with this expected migration flow;

6. Calls on the Member States to respect the principle of non-refoulement, in compliance with existing international and EU law; calls on the Member States to put an immediate end to any improper and extended detention practices in violation of international and European law; points out that measures to detain migrants must always be subject to an administrative decision, and must be duly substantiated and temporary;
7. Calls for better, more efficient cooperation between the EU and third countries to prevent a repetition of such tragic occurrences; considers that agreements on migration management between the EU and third countries should be contemplated only if the transit countries ensure protection of refugees and respect for fundamental rights; calls for assistance for transit countries – and migrants’ countries of origin – to diversify and improve their economies, and stresses the need for third countries to respect international law with regard to saving lives at sea;
8. Calls for the EU to continue to offer humanitarian, financial and political assistance in crisis areas in North Africa and the Middle East in order to tackle the root causes of migration and humanitarian pressures; calls on the EU, therefore, to monitor and make more democratically accountable the distribution of that funding, in order for such resources to have a positive effect, which has so far been lacking;
9. 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, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.