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## EU-Turkey deal: Next days will be crucial, human rights must be upheld, says Civil Liberties Chair

**The EU should offer support to Greece to ensure returns to Turkey are carried out in full respect of international law and human rights, according to Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committee Chair, Claude Moraes (S&D, UK).**

Following the agreement reached by EU leaders and the Turkish government on Friday 18 March, Mr Moraes said:

“The EU-Turkey deal agreed last week in response to the refugee crisis is already showing worrying signs which the European Parliament has previously warned. As stated by President Martin Schulz, we cannot “outsource” our problems to Turkey. We must observe international law and human rights.

Following the decision to carry out readmissions of refugees and asylum-seekers to Turkey it is important that Greece is given much needed support from member states without delay to ensure its asylum conditions are significantly improved to carry out returns in full respect of international law. Greece cannot be left alone to shoulder the responsibility of the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War”.

Mr Moraes set out some key concerns:

### Refunding and resources

“Just last week in a joint meeting of the Civil Liberties and Development committees with Commissioner Styliades, MEPs were given assurances that the relocation of 160,000 people in need of international protection from Italy and Greece was still in place. Under the deal, relocation appears to be put on hold which raises key questions as to what guarantees will member states give to support the thousands of persons stuck in Greece following the border closures along the ‘west-Balkan route’. Member states must not ignore their existing commitments to take in people in clear need of international protection”.

## Trafficking

“On the issue of smuggling, as spring approaches it is important that we move the narrative towards enhancing safer and legal routes to Europe to avoid more deaths at sea. Focusing on strengthening borders and sending people back will merely offer smuggling networks the chance to expand to other parts of the Mediterranean and Aegean, which will lead to more dangerous routes taken to reach the EU”.

## Human Rights and non-refoulement

“As the refugee population continues to increase in the world, the EU needs to take a global approach to migration based on the principle of solidarity between states. The European Parliament and Civil Liberties committee in particular, will be watching every step of the way to ensure that this deal observes international law and if it does not we will call it out”.

*Disclaimer: this is an informal message intended to help journalists covering the work of the European Parliament. It is neither an official press release nor a comprehensive record of proceedings.*

## Further information

[European Council conclusions \(18.03.2016\)](#)

[European Commission proposal for the allocation of 54.000 places for resettlements of Syrians from Turkey \(21.03.2016\)](#)

[Claude Moraes \(S&D, UK\)](#)

[Civil Liberties committee web page](#)

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