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Plenary sitting

16.10.2013

B7-0474/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa
(2013/2827(RSP))

**Salvatore Iacolino, Véronique Mathieu Houillon, Manfred Weber,
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on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa (2013/2827(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1168/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union¹,
- having regard to the position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading on 10 October 2013 with a view to the adoption of Regulation (EU) No .../2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR)²,
- having regard to the Joint Communication of the Commission and of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 20 March 2013 entitled ‘European Neighbourhood Policy: Working towards a Stronger Partnership’ (JOIN/2013/0004),
- having regard to its resolution of 7 April 2011 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy – Southern Dimension³,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office⁴,
- having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the additional protocols thereto,
- having regard to Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals⁵,
- having regard to Council Decision 2009/371/JHA of 6 April 2009 establishing the European Police Office (Europol)⁶,
- having regard to the oral question on ‘Voluntary permanent Union relocation scheme’ of 20 May 2013,
- having regard to the report of its Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the visit by its delegation to Lampedusa in November 2011,

¹ OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 1.

² P7_TA(2013)0416.

³ OJ C 296 E, 2.10.2012, p. 114.

⁴ OJ L 132, 29.5.2010, p. 11.

⁵ OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98.

⁶ OJ L 121, 15.5.2009, p. 37.

- taking note of the visit to Lampedusa by Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmström of 9 October 2013 and the related debate in plenary, held on the same day, on EU migratory policies in the Mediterranean Sea, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa,
 - having regard to the final resolution of its Special Committee on Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering, with particular reference to the fight against human trafficking and death traffickers,
 - having regard to Articles 77 and 80 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas several hundred migrants died recently near the Italian island of Lampedusa and several thousand others have died in recent decades in the Mediterranean Sea;
 - B. whereas the tragic events off Lampedusa have to be considered in the context of migratory flows in the Mediterranean, which are permanent and uncontrolled and mostly affect Member States in southern Europe, but constitute a serious concern for all the Member States;
 - C. whereas political turmoil in North Africa, notably Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, and, more recently, the Syrian crisis have led to a disturbing increase in irregular migratory flows, resulting in an exceptional situation;
 - D. whereas the new revised Common European Asylum System (CEAS) aims to provide clearer rules and to guarantee fair and adequate protection of refugees in need of international protection, in a context of ordinary and regular migration flows;
 - E. whereas the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility is outlined in Article 80 TFEU;
 - F. whereas Frontex coordinates, inter alia, patrols off the Italian coast using personnel, boats, planes and helicopters which have to some degree been lent by a number of Member States;
 - G. whereas the Commission has proposed enhancing Frontex's role in the Mediterranean Sea, deploying a patrolling search-and-rescue operation from Cyprus to Spain and taking advantage of the EUROSUR system;
 - H. whereas in the last few days the Commission has pledged EUR 30 million in EU funds to Italy in connection with migratory flows;
 - I. whereas smuggling and human trafficking exploit irregular migration and victims are forced, lured or deceived into coming to Europe by criminal networks, and whereas these problems pose serious security threats to the EU and a serious risk to the lives of migrants;
1. Regrets the fact that the tragic events in Lampedusa were not prevented despite the measures already in place to save lives in the Mediterranean;

2. Considers that the instruments and measures currently in place do not make it possible to provide effective solutions in order to prevent this kind of tragedy happening again, as has been directly stated by the Italian authorities;
3. Considers that saving lives in the Mediterranean starts in third countries and calls for better, more efficient cooperation between the EU and third countries to prevent a repetition of occurrences such as those off Lampedusa;
4. Welcomes the new Mare Nostrum patrolling, rescue and surveillance operation launched by Italy to enhance humanitarian rescue activities in the Mediterranean;
5. Calls for humanitarian assistance for survivors of such tragic events and for the EU and its Member States to remain committed to guaranteeing the universal fundamental rights of those survivors, in particular unaccompanied minors;
6. Underlines the fact that, while guaranteeing human rights for all migrants, the EU should concentrate on genuine refugees under the Geneva Convention in order to provide the best possible assistance and protection to those who are entitled to them;
7. Recognises the huge efforts made by the Italian authorities, non-governmental organisations such Caritas and the Red Cross, and the local population as regards the initial reception of, and rescue operations for, all immigrants and refugees, and calls on the Commission to make available in the near future the resources announced by President Barroso;
8. Stresses that a more coherent approach and greater solidarity with those Member States facing particular pressure are needed in relation to the reception of refugees;
9. Calls on the Commission to provide assistance to third countries, especially countries of origin and transit to the EU, in improving local infrastructure, medical assistance, border controls, asylum systems and reception conditions;
10. Considers the bilateral agreements on migration management between the EU and transit countries to the EU to be a priority for the Union in the near future, including the funding of police facilities and training in law enforcement capabilities, and assistance for these countries – and migrants' countries of origin – to diversify and improve their economies;
11. Welcomes the establishment by the Council, as proposed by Italy, of a task force to enhance the tools at the EU's disposal, which could be used more effectively through the cooperation method;
12. Calls, as a matter of priority, for better coordination of EU means and resources, including those at the disposal of Frontex (such as EUROSUR) and Europol, in order to step up, together with third countries, the fight against criminal networks of human traffickers and smugglers;
13. Welcomes the Commission's proposals to deploy a search-and-rescue operation from Cyprus to Spain and to strengthen Frontex by increasing its budget and capacities in order to save lives and combat human trafficking and smuggling; encourages the Member States

to send more border guards, means and equipment to assist Frontex, and to evaluate the possibility of setting up a team of EU coast guards under the auspices of Frontex;

14. Calls for the tightening-up of sanctions against smugglers and traffickers in human beings and for wide-ranging information campaigns to raise awareness of the kinds of risk faced by those who put their lives into the hands of traffickers and smugglers;
15. Underlines the fact that the Member States could envisage a process of relocation within the EU, on a voluntary basis;
16. Asks the Council and the Commission to consider the possibility of establishing another Frontex operational office in the Mediterranean region, with all costs to be paid by the Member State selected;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.