



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Poslanecká sněmovna for its Opinion concerning the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a European Agenda on Migration {COM(2015) 240 final}.

The Commission appreciates the support given to the great majority of concrete measures outlined in the abovementioned Communication, namely those proposals that will effectively contribute to saving lives and those aiming in a long-run to decrease migratory pressure in the EU, and is pleased to note that the Poslanecká sněmovna stands ready to engage in their implementation.

The Commission values the past and on-going active involvement of the Czech Republic in a number of initiatives providing targeted and effective assistance to the countries of origin or transit of migrants with the aim to support their stabilisation and further development. The Commission shares the assessment that, in a long-term perspective, these efforts are essential to effectively address the root causes of migration.

The Agenda presented by the Commission is a comprehensive package integrating the external and internal dimensions and balancing the principles of responsibility (i.e. new approach to fingerprinting, a targeted strategy to ensure the full implementation of the asylum acquis) and solidarity (i.e. relocation mechanism, reinforced Triton operation). The measures proposed therein put forward solutions to better manage migration in all its aspects and can deliver the desired outcome only if implemented in their entirety.

The Commission takes note of the position of the Poslanecká sněmovna to maintain the voluntary nature of solidarity. As repeatedly stressed by the Commission, solidarity is a fundamental value enshrined in the Treaty and is one of the cornerstones for a fair and effective management of migration policy. It is an integral part of a clear commitment to provide international protection to those who are entitled to it as well as an obligation to take

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responsibility to help Member States facing particular high migratory pressure, as envisaged by Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The resettlement and relocation schemes proposed by the Commission translate these principles in practice while providing safeguards to deter possible abuses.

In parallel the Commission reiterates that such efforts of solidarity need to be matched by an equivalent ambition to ensure the full and consistent application of the existing norms, including the Dublin III Regulation which represents the fundament for the functioning of the Common European Asylum System in its current design. The Agenda on Migration foresees dedicated initiatives to ensure the coherent implementation of the European standards, and to allow for a swift registration and processing of asylum claims.

In this context the Commission can reassure the Poslanecká sněmovna that the envisaged measures to prevent secondary movements are not conceived to undermine the functioning of the Schengen area but on the contrary, to strengthen it by setting up clear consequences for those not respecting certain obligations.

The full respect of the existing norms extends to the position of the migrants who are not in need of protection and reside irregularly on the territory of the Member States. This is why the European Agenda indicates targeted actions to ensure the swift return of irregularly staying third country nationals while respecting the rights and safeguards foreseen in the Return Directive.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided address the issues raised by the Poslanecká sněmovna and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Elżbieta BIENKOWSKA
Member of the Commission*