



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 13.2.2018  
C(2018) 669 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion on the Twelfth and Thirteenth Reports on Relocation and Resettlement {COM(2017) 260 and 330 final}.*

*In its regular reports, the Commission aims at identifying possible bottlenecks and corresponding solutions, thereby promoting a sound and swift implementation of the relocation and resettlement schemes. Enhancing transparency is a priority for the Commission and with these reports stakeholders and the general public have been able to obtain constant updated information about the state of implementation of both schemes, including about Member States that needed to do more.*

*The Commission is pleased that the Senato della Repubblica shares the Commission's recommendations and calls on Member States to fulfil their relocation obligations by making the relocation procedure effective, prioritising vulnerable applicants and finding mutually acceptable solutions for organising additional security interviews.*

*As regards relocation, the priority is first and foremost to ensure that all eligible applicants, including unaccompanied minors that arrived by 26 September 2017, will be effectively relocated. As indicated in the Commission's latest update of 7 December 2017 as part of the Commission Communication contribution to the European Union Leaders' thematic debate on a way forward on the external and the internal dimension of migration policy {COM(2017)820 final}, 2,363 applicants remain to be relocated from Italy. Italy should have finalised the registration exercise of all eligible candidates by the end of the 2017.*

*Given that the migratory pressure on Italy and Greece remains high, we believe that the European Union should continue to show solidarity with Italy and Greece. We therefore stand ready to provide financial support to those Member States sustaining their relocation efforts beyond the current schemes. The assistance provided by European*

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*Asylum Support Office and other Union agencies to Italy and Greece will also continue and, when needed, be further reinforced<sup>1</sup>.*

*However, the European Union cannot continue with ad-hoc solutions, such as the temporary emergency relocation mechanism. That is why the Commission has presented the necessary proposals for a full reform of the Common European Asylum System in spring 2016.*

*To reach an overall agreement on this reform, as part of a comprehensive European migration policy, by June 2018, the Commission presented on 7 December 2017 a roadmap that highlights the steps to be taken. We look forward to work with all actors to reach this objective set by the European Council<sup>2</sup>.*

*Finally, the Commission is also committed to increasing legal pathways for migration. Resettlement efforts are part of the European Union asylum and migration policy. These legal pathways, as alternatives to irregular and dangerous journeys, help to save lives, contribute to reducing irregular migration and alleviate migratory pressure on frontline Member States. The first European Union-wide resettlement scheme launched in July 2015 has yielded good results. More than 26,000 people have been resettled under this scheme and the scheme established under the European Union - Turkey Statement since their launch. As follow up to that, the Commission on 27 September 2017 recommended to Member States to make new resettlement commitments for 50,000 additional places over the next two years. With already around 40,000 pledges received, this more ambitious target is within reach.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Senato della Repubblica and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Dimitris Avramopoulos  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>1</sup> COM 2017(558) final.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2017) 820 final.