



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council - Addressing the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Role of EU External Action {JOIN(2015) 40 final}.

The Commission is pleased that the Camera Deputaților fully supports the strategic orientation and the set of actions to address the refugee crisis in Europe as set out in the Communication.

Managing migration effectively is a long-term challenge for Europe that requires a multifaceted response addressing all aspects of the migration phenomenon: economic and political stability, human rights, security, crisis management, as well as humanitarian, development and mobility aspects. As the Camera Deputaților rightly points out in its Opinion, the EU needs a comprehensive strategy in order to successfully manage migration and tackle the root causes of forced migration and displacement. We must provide protection, hope and future to these people fleeing their countries to escape war and violence.

In the short term, the Communication builds upon a solid structure of international engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels in this field to address the current migration and refugee crisis. It should be recalled that the EU has recently stepped up its efforts to respond to the crisis: it has reoriented and mobilised external instruments with the objective to save lives, ensure the protection of those in need, combat the trafficking and smuggling of migrants, ensure the return and readmission of those who have no right to stay in the EU, and manage borders and mobility. The European Agenda on Migration presented by the Commission on 13 May 2015, the two Commission implementing packages and the several European Councils held in 2015 on migration provide us with a solid political basis.

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Our external engagement goes together with partnership on the ground. The Commission and the High Representative continue to work closely on migration with key countries of origin and transit as well as with major international stakeholders with which cooperation is paramount. In this respect, the EU is playing an active role on the global scene and is engaging with partners and key actors. The High Level Conference on Eastern Mediterranean-Western Balkans Route held in Luxembourg on 8 October 2015, the Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting of 25 October 2015, the Valletta Summit held on 11-12 November 2015 with our African partners and the EU-Turkey Summit held on 29 November 2015 have all provided useful platforms for closer cooperation on migration. In parallel, the EU continues to pursue diplomatic efforts to relaunch talks for a political transition and lasting peaceful solution in Syria, including through notably the recently held Vienna talks.

The Commission is pleased to inform the Camera Deputaților that the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis has recently adopted a package of programmes totalling EUR 350 million. These measures will provide urgently needed aid to 1.5 million refugees and overstretched host communities in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. In parallel, the EU continues to support the long standing commitment of international organisations and UN agencies and to work closely with them.

Regarding the temporary reintroduction of internal border controls, the Commission will continue to closely monitor the situation, and believes that full implementation of the priority actions will allow a swift return to a fully functioning Schengen system in the months to come.

The Commission appreciates the ongoing support of the Camera Deputaților for a coordinated European response to the refugee crisis and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Federica Mogherini
High Representative/Vice-President*