



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 16.11.2015  
C(2015) 7736 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Národná Rada for its Opinion concerning the Commission Proposal for a Council Decision establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece {COM(2015) 286 final}.*

*The Commission appreciates that the Národná Rada recognizes the imperative to address the critical situation that is currently being faced in the Mediterranean due to significant migration flows. As the Národná Rada is certainly well aware, by rapid response to the humanitarian crisis in that region, the Commission has substantially reinforced the financial and operation capacities of Frontex in order to strengthen its search and rescue operations. The Commission is very pleased that its efforts have already brought tangible results as death rates at sea have dropped and thousands of migrants in danger have been rescued.*

*Moreover, the Commission has proposed, for the first time, to trigger the emergency response under the Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) to assist Italy and Greece. The objective of this measure is to relieve the asylum systems of those Member States which are confronted with exceptionally heavy migratory pressure, while at the same time ensuring proper protection of applicants in clear need.*

*The Commission welcomes the readiness of the Slovak Republic to assist in resolving this humanitarian crisis and takes note of the position of the Národná Rada that contributions of the Member States to these solidarity efforts should remain voluntary taking into account possibilities and capacities of individual Member States.*

*The Commission also takes careful note that the Národná Rada opposes the distribution key proposed for the relocation and resettlement schemes by the Commission.*

*Mr Peter PELLEGRINI  
President of the Národná Rada  
Námestie Alexandra Dubčeka 1  
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*The Commission welcomes that the relocation decisions for 160 000 persons were formally adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on the 14 and 22 September 2015, and that Member States on 20 July 2015 agreed to resettle, over two years, 22 504 displaced persons in clear need of international protection.*

*The Commission took note that the Slovak Republic voted against when the decision was adopted by qualified majority vote on 22 September by the Justice and Home Affairs Council. In any case, both relocation schemes have now to be implemented in full and as a matter of urgency.*

*The Commission fully agrees that we cannot limit our action to deal with migration pressure. The European Agenda on Migration which the Commission presented in May 2015 provides a comprehensive approach to migration management based on the principles of solidarity and responsibility. The proposed measures include improving the effectiveness of our return policies as well as on tackling the root causes of migration. These focus on fighting the smuggling of migrants and on strengthening the cooperation with third countries of origin and transit in order to improve their capacities in borders management, asylum systems, and readmission.*

*The Commission presented a number of measures to implement the European Agenda on Migration on 27 May and 9 September. The Commission would encourage the Národná Rada to look at those measures as part of the comprehensive package, which we believe offers an ambitious and balanced response by the EU.*

*We would also like to draw your attention to the Communication "Managing the Refugee Crisis" that was adopted on 23 September 2015 that sets out the key measures immediately required in terms of: (i) operational measures; (ii) budgetary support (iii) implementation of EU law and (iv) next legislative steps within the next six months, as well as to the Commission's report adopted on 14 October 2015 on the state of play of the implementation of the priority actions under the European Agenda on Migration.*

*Addressing the refugee crisis and managing the migratory pressure on our external borders is the most pressing priority the Union faces today, and instability, war and poverty in our neighbourhood mean that this issue will need to remain at the top of the political agenda for some years to come.*

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

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Dimitris Avramopoulos  
Member of the Commission*