

## **Migrants in the Mediterranean, 32 organisations across the EU appeal to the European Council**

Brussels, 22 April 2015

The signatory organisations are dismayed to learn of the decisions adopted on Monday 20 April by the EU Council of Ministers.

Other than restating a commitment to facilitate the resettlement of refugees and develop relocation initiatives, the Council confines itself to a rhetoric that has not only demonstrated its ineffectiveness, but has led to growing human tragedies at Europe's maritime borders.

As migrants strive valiantly to save both their lives and their freedom by attempting to reach Europe, because it is the land of refuge closest to them, we expected the ministers of the Member States to take emergency measures. The only worthy goal in these circumstances is to ensure the safe transit of these exiles.

But, in a display of blind obstinacy, the Council of Ministers has decided otherwise. Not only will Frontex be given even more powers, but third countries — Libya's neighbours — shall be mobilised. In short, there will be no room for refugees from Eritrea, Sudan, and Syria, in particular, on our territory.

Our organisations consider that in doing so, the European Union would explicitly assume responsibility for the deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean sea. For this reason, we are appealing to the European Council as it meets on 23 April.

We ask the European Council to reestablish the commitment that, a little over fifteen years ago, paved the way for *"an open and secure European Union, fully committed to the obligations of the Geneva Refugee Convention and other relevant human rights instruments, and able to respond to humanitarian needs on the basis of solidarity."*

The European Union has no other choice but to face reality: thousands of exiles absolutely need to find shelter. By virtue of its history, in application of the principles upon which it based its construction, to honour its international commitments, the EU must welcome them and, furthermore, introduce the necessary measures to secure their voyage towards our borders. This implies not just the essential duty of rescuing those who take incredible risks to cross the Mediterranean, but to open up legal means of migration so that they need not place their lives at stake.

It is up to the European Council to make such decisions. The signatory organisations are explicitly calling upon the Council to do so.

**Signatories :**



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK  
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الشبكة الأوروبية - المتوسطية لحقوق الإنسان



Liga voor de Rechten van de Mens



FEANTSA



Ligue des Droits de l'Homme  
Action Luxembourg Ouvert et Solidaire

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