



Joint statement by First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioner Avramopoulos on Calais and European migration priorities

Brussels, 20 August 2015

We welcome today's declaration of the British and French authorities to intensify their cooperation in relation to the migration situation in Calais. On such cross border challenges, the Commission supports the strengthening of cooperation between Member States and will continue to play its role in supporting the Member States when exercising their responsibilities in the area of freedom, security and justice.

The very operational measures announced today in Calais by French Minister Bernard Cazeneuve and UK Home Secretary Theresa May will help speed up the processing of the asylum seekers and ensure the swift return of the irregular migrants. These measures contribute to achieving the objectives of the European Agenda on Migration put forward by the Commission. They put into practice the common approach agreed in the European Council.

We are happy to announce that we will both visit Calais on 31 of August to meet with Prime Minister Manuel Valls and Minister of Interior Bernard Cazeneuve, see the situation on the ground, including the migrant day centre, Jules Ferry, co-financed by the EU, and to discuss next steps. In the context of reinforcing Member State efforts in dealing with migration pressure, we also welcome the meeting foreseen later today between Ministers Bernard Cazeneuve and Thomas de Maizière.

The European Commission is deeply committed to delivering every aspect of the European Agenda on Migration, and to support Member States in dealing with the current migration crisis. We have made incredible progress in the course of just a few months, and we are getting increasing support for a genuinely European response. But we are not there yet: managing migration is not just about emergencies, but also about long-term solutions. We all need to do more, together and swiftly. As set out in the European Agenda for Migration, we need a permanent emergency relocation mechanism, we need a strict enforcement and compliance with agreed European rules, we need a more coordinated and European definition of safe countries of origin, and we need to explore ways to open more legal channels for migration. On all of this, the Commission has proposals ready and we count on Member States for their courage and commitment. This is a European challenge, and requires a European response.

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