



**Statewatch Observatory on the refugee crisis in the Med
and inside the EU**
21 October – 24 November 2015

See: [Observatory: EU refugee crisis - a humanitarian emergency](#)

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1. EU: Council calls for Summit with Turkey on migration: [Invitation letter by President Donald Tusk to the EU heads of state or government for a meeting with Turkey](#) (pdf): *"I have now decided to call a meeting of the Heads of State or government of the EU with Turkey this coming Sunday (29 November). The meeting will mark an important step in developing our relations and contribute to managing the migration crisis."*

1A. EU: In the light of the refugee humanitarian crisis this year, and the recent Valletta Summit with Africa, it is interesting to look at the following, highly detailed Council of the European Union report on "migratory pressures", adopted in May 2014: [EU Action on Migratory Pressures - A Strategic Response - 4th Biannual Update](#) (LIMITE doc no: 9277-rev-1-14, 78 pages, pdf) including:

"Strategic Priority III- Preventing illegal immigration from Turkey:

Several initiatives aimed at preventing illegal immigration from Turkey have been undertaken at various levels. Regarding cooperation between the Greek and Turkish authorities, progress has been noticed in a number of areas during the last period of time....

And under: *"Strategic priority area: Preventing illegal immigration from Turkey"*

"As of August 2012 and continuing, seaborne migratory flows transiting from Turkey to Greece destined to other EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries have increased significantly...."

2. Refugee Crisis: [Balkans border blocks leave thousands segregated and stranded in Greece](#) (AI, link):

"During the night of 18 November, Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia all changed their border management practices suddenly, without prior notice, and more or less simultaneously.

Macedonia was the first to act, by refusing to admit anyone unless they have papers to prove they originate from Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria. This meant that hundreds of people were stranded, either because they are from other countries, including Iran, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Pakistan, or because they do not have identity papers. Greek border police in the village of Idomeni continue to prevent nationals of countries other than Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria from leaving on the basis that Macedonia would not let them in.

"These governments appear to have acted without thinking through the consequences for thousands of people who are now stranded in grossly inadequate conditions with nowhere to go and precious little humanitarian assistance. With thousands more people on the way, action is urgently needed to reverse this worsening disaster" John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Director at Amnesty International."

3. From [UNHCR](#) : 850,591 arrivals, 703,374 to Greece and 143,500 to Italy. 3,485 dead/missing.

4. EU: Justice and Home Affairs Council, 20 November 2015: [Conclusions of the Council and Member States on counter-terrorism](#) (pdf):

"in the context of the current migration crisis, carry out a systematic registration, including fingerprinting, of third country nationals illegally entering the Schengen area, whether migrants or applicants for international protection, and perform systematic security checks by using relevant databases, in particular SIS II, Interpol databases, VIS and national police databases, with the support of Frontex and Europol, and ensure that hotspots are equipped with the relevant technology. Europol will deploy guest officers to the hotspots in support of the screening process, in particular by reinforcing secondary security controls,"

And see: [Paris attacks show flawed use of Schengen rules, ministers confess](#) (euractiv, link): *"The ministers agreed on making these [border checks] checks mandatory. Moreover, all EU citizens will be now considered a potential threat, so all EU travellers will be subject to a stricter scrutiny, including checks against the Schengen Information System (SIS), as is the case for all third country nationals. and*

[Paris attacks show flawed use of Schengen rules, ministers confess](#) (euobserver, link): *"We need to check Europeans because the threat comes from within," a French official said.. "Our collective reaction must be ruthless," French interior minister Bernard Cazeneuve said at a press conference."*

5. [IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF Joint Statement on New Border Restrictions in the Balkans](#) (link):

"In the last couple of days, we have witnessed Governments instituting a range of restrictions against movements of refugees and migrants from Greece through the Western Balkans and further northwards.

This includes people being profiled on the basis of nationality. This is becoming increasingly untenable from every point of view – humanitarian, legal, and also safety related, not least in light of falling temperatures and the risks for children and others with specific needs.

These measures by States are creating tension at border crossings and a domino effect, leaving in total limbo some refugees and migrants stranded at different border points..."

And: [Tempers flare at Greek-FYROM border](#) (ekathimerini.com): *"Tempers have flared at Greece's main border crossing with Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), where riot police pushed back thousands of migrants jostling to cross over, after FYROM blocked access to people deemed to be economic migrants and not refugees. Holding their identity papers aloft, several hundred Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis, who are being allowed into FYROM, crossed the border Friday morning until police halted the flow again to ease congestion on the FYROM side. Once across, migrants head for the nearby Gevgelija train station, to continue by rail north through Serbia toward wealthier northern European Union countries. About 3,000 people remain on the Greek side of the border near the village of Idomeni, including about 1,000 Iranians and north Africans whom FYROM is not letting in."*

6. EU: [Migrant journeys: respecting the dead](#) (IRR, link): An interview with Catriona Jarvis, former judge of the United Kingdom Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber), and now a writer/activist on human rights initiatives.

"Where states fail to take all reasonable steps to safeguard and identify the dead so as to enable surviving family to recover, lay to rest and mourn their loved ones, potential breaches of the right to dignity and to freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment arise, as well as failure to respect the right to family life and to physical and moral integrity of those left behind..."

across Europe, and indeed globally, there is an urgent need for a new visa regime to allow not only humanitarian visas for those fleeing serious harm, but also visas to permit lawful movement of bereaved family members and procedures for repatriation of bodies in such situations."

See also: Statewatch Viewpoint: [In Potters' Fields](#) (pdf) by Catriona Jarvis: A potter's field, pauper's grave, or common grave, is a term for a place used for the burial of unknown or indigent people.

7. EU: Justice and Home Affairs Council, 20 November 2015: [Draft Conclusions of the Council of the EU and of the Member States meeting within the Council on Counter-Terrorism](#) (LIMITE doc no: 14298-15, pdf): includes:

"implement immediately the necessary systematic and coordinated checks at external borders, including on individuals enjoying the right of free movement,..."

in the context of the current migratory crisis, carry out a systematic registration, including fingerprinting, of all migrants entering into the Schengen area and perform systematic security checks by using relevant databases in particular SIS II, Interpol SLTD database, VIS and national police databases, with the support of Frontex and Europol, and ensure that hotspots are equipped with the relevant technology. Europol will deploy guest officers to the hotspots in support of the screening process, in particular by reinforcing secondary security controls,...

provide, in its proposal to update the Frontex Regulation, a solid legal basis for the contribution of Frontex to the fight against terrorism and organised crime and access to the relevant databases.... Frontex will: contribute to the fight against terrorism and support the coordinated implementation of the Common Risk Indicators (CRIs) before the end of 2015, – **assist the Member States to tighten controls of external borders to detect suspicious travels of foreign terrorist fighters and smuggling of firearms, in cooperation with Europol, – work closely with Europol and Eurojust, in particular in the context of the hotspots...**"

8. Refugee crisis: [Serbia, FYROM limit migrant passage to Syrians, Iraqis and Afghan](#) (ekathimerini.com, link):

"Serbia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) have begun limiting the passage of migrants across their borders to Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans, turning back Africans and Asians, the United Nations said on Thursday.

A senior police source in FYROM, who declined to be named, said Skopje had acted after European Union member Slovenia, further along the migrant path, had told countries in the region that it would start doing the same. "They will turn back all others on the basis they are economic migrants," the official said." nad see:

[Balkan countries implement tighter border restrictions](#) (DW, link):

"The U.N. refugee agency says three Balkan countries have shut their borders for migrants from states that are not directly engulfed in wars. Hundreds of thousands of people pass through the Balkan route to reach Germany. ...

The UNHCR says Macedonia has begun allowing only people from these three countries to cross its southern border from Greece, while Greek authorities say migrants of other nationalities are gathering on the Greek side of the border and blocking the crossing completely. Aleksandra Kraus, a UNHCR spokeswoman in Macedonia, said Thursday that Macedonian authorities had begun allowing only people from warzones to enter the country because Serbian authorities had imposed the same criteria on those attempting to cross the Macedonian-Serbian border." also

[Balkan states start filtering migrant flow to Europe](#) (Reuters, link): "Balkan countries have begun filtering the flow of migrants to Europe, granting passage to those fleeing conflict in the Middle East and Afghanistan but turning back others from Africa and Asia, the United Nations and Reuters witnesses said on Thursday.

The move left hundreds of people stranded on borders. On Serbia's frontier with European Union-member Croatia about 400 were denied access to a train and were halted by Croatian police as they tried to cross the border through fields, a spokeswoman for the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR), said..

.A police spokesman in EU-member Slovenia confirmed Ljubljana would start returning "economic migrants" arriving through neighbouring Croatia, saying it could only grant passage to those "from countries where there are armed battles"."

9. European Parliament: [Working Document: on EU internal and external funding related to its migration and asylum policy Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Co-Rapporteurs: Roberta Metsola, Kashetu Kyenge Shadow Rapporteurs: Barbara Spinelli, Ignazio Corrao](#) (pdf)

10. European Asylum Support Office (EASO): [Newsletter - October 2015](#) (pdf):

"Since 17 September 2015, EASO experts have been deployed in Lampedusa, Catania, Villa Sikania/Agrigento, Rome and Milan to support the daily activity of local Police and asylum authorities to jointly process the applications for international protection of the potential applicants for a relocation scheme in the European Union..."

and in Italy and Greece: *Matching of applicants with the most appropriate MS of Relocation and preparing the transfer to the MS of Relocation. EASO experts will assist the units processing such files as well with regular Dublin cases."*

11. Commission: [State of Play: Measures to Address the Refugee Crisis: Brussels, 12 November 2015](#) (pdf)

- [State of Play of Hotspot capacity](#) (pdf): Greece and Italy. Lesbos, Greece::"Total Reception Capacity 700 (Moria) 780 (Kara Tepe)"
- [Returns since September](#) (pdf) From Italy 153 and none from Greece. Frontex 569 "returns"
- [Member States' Support to Emergency Relocation Mechanism](#) (pdf) Relocation places available: 14 Member States 3,216 places (out of 160,000). A total of 142 refugees have been relocated.
- [Member States' financial pledges since 23 September 2015](#) (pdf)
- [Member States' Support to Civil Protection Mechanism for Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia](#) (pdf)

See: First report: [State of Play: Measures to Address the Refugee Crisis](#) (6.11.15, pdf)

12. CoE: [Third party intervention: Commissioner Muižnieks intervenes before the European Court of Human Rights on migration cases concerning Spain](#) (link):

"Today, Commissioner Muižnieks has submitted written observations to the European Court of Human Rights in relation to two complaints concerning alleged pushbacks of migrants from the Spanish city of Melilla to Morocco.

Basing his [observations on his visit to Melilla in January 2015](#) as well as on other credible reports, the Commissioner underscores the existence of an established practice of summary returns of migrants who attempt to enter Melilla in groups by climbing the fence surrounding the city. "Such returns, which affect Sub-Saharan Africans in particular, take place outside of any formal procedure and without identification of the persons concerned or assessment of their individual situation. This prevents the persons concerned from effectively exercising their right to seek international protection" he writes in his third party intervention."

and [Written submission to the court: CoE ECHR-Spain](#) (pdf)

13. European Parliament Study: [Migrants in the Mediterranean: Protecting Human Rights](#) (62 pages, pdf) Concludes that current policies are more geared to keeping so-called "illegal" migrants out and to return them rather than with effective measures to protect human rights and saving lives. Well worth reading.

14. European Commission: DG Migration & Home Affairs: [A study on smuggling of migrants: Characteristics, responses and cooperation with third countries Final Report](#) (179 pages, pdf)

15. Frontex: [540 000 migrants arrived on Greek islands in the first 10 months of 2015](#) (link)
Frontex still putting out dodgy numbers: *"Overall, the number of detections of illegal border crossings at the EU's external borders between January and October stood at **an unprecedented 1.2 million**"*

Frontex gets headline news with this kind of press release by its own admission it includes double-counting:

"Clarification: Frontex provides monthly data on the number of people detected at the external borders of the European Union. Irregular border crossings may be attempted by the same person several times in different locations at the external border. This means that a large number of the people who were counted when they arrived in Greece were again counted when entering the EU for the second time through Hungary or Croatia."

Whereas UNHCR reported: [Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response - Mediterranean](#) (infographic, link) **502, 840 arrivals (during the year to 29 October, 2015)**

16. [Valletta Conference 11-12 November 2015: Update: Final texts and full documentation](#)

17. EU: [Informal meeting of EU heads of state or government](#) (12 November 2015, Valletta, Press release, pdf) there is nothing new except a growing urgency as "time is running out" to save Schengen. Council trying to set up another "special" Summit of 28 Member States and Turkey before year end:

But see: [EU's 'indecent proposal' angers Turkish minister](#) (hurriyetdailynews.com, link): "Turkish EU Minister Beril Dedeoglu has been left apoplectic after Brussels suggested "an inappropriate proposal" to Ankara that linked Turkey's EU accession process with a solution to the refugee crisis.... During a dinner ... a young person from the commission attempted to match the progress report to refugee issue. Something like 'We could soften the content of this progress report if we sort out the refugee issue,' was said. I swear I can't even remember how I chided him..."

and Tusk reiterates that:

"it must be clear that without registration there will be no rights. If a migrant does not cooperate, there must be consequences. It is also clear that asylum seekers cannot decide where they will be granted asylum within the European Union."

18. Reactions to Valletta Summit

[Migration crisis: European and African leaders agree €1.8bn 'trust fund'](#) (Guardian, link): "Compromise package in which African governments agree to cooperate on receiving deported migrants described as 'lowest common denominator'"

and [Europe fund to tackle African migration 'not enough'](#) (BBC News, link): "Senegal's President Macky Sall has described a \$1.9bn (£1.2bn) European fund set up to tackle irregular migration as a good beginning but said more money was needed.... "The Senegalese leader also pointed to tax avoidance by multinationals that he estimated cost Africa billions of dollars. "We have sufficient resources in Africa... if we could combat tax evasion - that would stop us calling for aid. "Terrorism is an issue, wherever war is waged people flee - where there's less development people flee towards development," he said. "We have to look at migration serenely, take the drama out of it. And we have to tackle the traffickers.""

[EU's migration cash for Africa falls short](#) (euractiv, link): "The European Union's efforts to stem the flow of refugees from Africa was undermined today (12 November) by member states who failed to match EU money for a €1.8 billion trust fund to the tune of €1.72 billion, raising just €78 million. EU and African leaders were meeting in Valletta, Malta, for a two-day summit in response to the migration crisis. €1.8 billion from the EU budget and European Development Fund was stumped up for the emergency trust fund, which will pay for measures to tackle the reasons refugees flee."

"For the Africa Trust Fund and our response to be credible, I want to see more member states contributing and matching the €1.8 billion the EU has put forward," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said as EU leaders signed the deal. But, at time of going to press, 25 of the 28 member states, and two non-EU donors Norway and Switzerland, had pledged a total of around €78.2 million matching funds, far short of what Juncker has called for... Civil society organisations have warned that, if they do pay into the trust fund, EU countries could divert development cash meant for schools and hospitals to checkpoints and barb wire. Sara Tesorieri, Oxfam's migration policy lead in

Malta, said, "The EU Trust Fund for Africa must have a clear separation between development aid and security cooperation envelopes ? these have different objectives and do not belong in the same pot."

[Europe in 'race against time' to save open borders - EU's Tusk](#) (Reuters, link): ""We must hurry, but without panic," he said after a summit with African leaders that will be followed by an emergency EU summit later on Thursday in Valletta to discuss migration and notably efforts to secure a deal with Turkey to slow departures."

19. EU-AFRICA: Valletta Summit: [VALLETTA SUMMIT, 11-12 NOVEMBER 2015 ACTION PLAN - Final](#) (pdf) and [VALLETTA SUMMIT, 11-12 NOVEMBER 2015: Declaration - Final](#) (pdf) see: [Remarks by President Donald Tusk at the press conference of the Valletta summit on migration](#) (pdf)

EU Commission: [A European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) (pdf): "**made up of €1.8 billion from the EU budget and the European Development Fund (EDF), to be complemented by contributions from EU Member States and other donors. To date, Member States' contributions amount to around €78.2 million**" The Member States are meant to match the Commission's contribution... and [List of Member State donors and contributions in Alphabetical order \(as at 11/11/2015\)](#) (pdf)

20. [Refugee Crisis May Threaten Development Aid to World's Poor](#) (afonline.org, link): "As the spreading refugee crisis threatens to destabilize national budgets of donor nations in Western Europe, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon Wednesday appealed to the international community not to forsake its longstanding commitment for development assistance to the world's poorer nations."

21. Valletta Summit: Statewatch Analysis: [EU-AFRICA Fortress Europe's neo-colonial project](#) (pdf) by Tony Bunyan

"The overall strategy in the latest draft, is not new, it is simply presented differently. The EU fundamental concern is to stop people, refugees or migrants, moving up the continent of Africa until they reach the shores of the Mediterranean – where they become the EU's problem.

This goes together with the demand for the creation of civil registry systems across Africa with biometrics (fingerprinting), quick "returns", new readmission agreements and the enforcement of its neo-colonial project through the "externalisation of Europe's asylum responsibilities".

22. [The EU and its neighbours: enforcing the politics of inhospitality](#) by Emmanuel Blanchard, Bill MacKeith, and Yasha Maccanico 11 November 2015 (Open Democracy, link):

"Today marks the start of the two-day Valletta Euro-African summit on migration in Malta, but the outcomes of deterrence, surveillance and militarisation are already written....

To attain their objectives, the EU and its member states have shown themselves willing to engage in all sorts of shameful behaviour: military operations led by France and Belgium in the Sahel are now envisaged as a way of cutting off migration routes; plans have been made to construct camps in Niger to facilitate forced or 'voluntary' returns away from European borders; the most repressive regimes (such as Sudan or Eritrea, especially in the context of the 'Khartoum process'), which produce tens of thousands of asylum seekers, receive subsidies to contain their populations and 'securitise' their borders."

23. EU: Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP): Crisis management missions outside EU looking for new migration roles: Germany/Netherlands: [DE/NL Food for Thought-Paper Tapping the full potential of CSDP in the field of migration](#)

24. [Valletta Summit: EU and Africa, so closed but so far](#) (afonline.org, link):

"EU-Africa summit on migration in La Valletta on the 11th and 12th November. Symbol of the tensions present between the parties, Morocco and Egypt, who are both respectively heads of the processes of Rabat and Khartoum, will send only foreign ministers."

25, [Hotspots: Europe Debates Initial Reception Centers for Refugees](#) (Der Spiegel, link);

"Lesbos and other such hotspots are a significant focus of efforts by the European Commission and German Chancellor Angela Merkel to find a solution to the refugee crisis. They would like to establish initial reception centers where refugees will not only be registered, but also housed until a cursory review is conducted to determine whether they might qualify for asylum or protection under the Geneva Convention on refugees.

Under the second part of the plan, refugees from countries with an average EU-wide asylum recognition rate of 75 percent would then be distributed among the rest of the member states. The others would face deportation.....

The biggest problem, however, is the lack of a clear answer to the question as to what happens to refugees who have little chance of remaining in Europe. How will these people be prevented from heading towards Germany on their own? "It's a delicate issue," says one high-ranking EU official. "After all, the Greek government doesn't want to be accused of putting migrants in internment camps." Indeed, refugees attempting to escape from fenced-in camps is the one image that has yet to plague this European refugee crisis."

and see: [Avec les "hotspots", l'UE renforce sa politique de refoulement des boat people](#) (migreuropa, link)

26. [EU's deep dilemmas over refugees laid bare at Malta summit](#) (Guardian, link):

"More than 60 European and African leaders are meeting in the Maltese capital Valletta against a backdrop of ever-widening policy divisions....

"They say it's all about Europe externalising and outsourcing its own problems," said the diplomat, who has been liaising with the African governments. "The Europeans are not exactly visionaries," another international official taking part in Malta said. "And they don't realise that they are no longer the centre of the world.....

In the latest policy move, Berlin and Brussels are pressing the transit countries of the Balkans to set up new "processing centres" to screen asylum claimants. It is an admission that the policy of having them finger-printed and registered first in Greece before moving on has failed. Nor do Slovenia, Croatia or Serbia want to register them, however, for fear they will then be saddled with responsibility for the refugees....

"Most of these leaders are lost and they're looking to someone like Tusk to come up with a big idea," said the senior diplomat. "This is the challenge, because the whole thing can crumble and individual countries will start following Hungary. That won't help Europe to remain credible."

27. JOINT DECLARATION: [Human rights at the core of migration policies: An urgent call to European and African leaders](#) (Euro-mediterranean human rights network, link):

"Once again, terms of cooperation remain euro-centric and focused on efficient return/removal policies as well as on the need for cooperation on behalf of non-EU countries to fight so-called « irregular » migration.

In Europe and in Africa, the security obsession which has characterised migration policies is unfolding with increased border closures on both continents, despite fatal consequences and human rights violations.

As the EU is about to launch its new Neighbourhood Policy, our organisations wish to stress that migration is not a threat and express their grave concerns.."

[Link - French](#) and [Link Arabic](#)

28. [Malta summit: Experts raise concerns over lopsided EU-Africa migrant deals](#) (Malta Independent, link): "

"Forced into action by its biggest refugee crisis since World War II, the European Union is pressing some northern African nations to sign lopsided deals that would send thousands back without sufficient protection, African diplomats and migration experts are warning.

Concern is growing that the EU will use its considerable political and economic clout — including access to more than 1.8 billion euros (\$1.9 billion) in aid — to buy off vulnerable countries on the sidelines of a two-day summit with African leaders starting Wednesday in Malta.

Still wary of Europe's colonial past, some Africans believe the EU is desperately trying to outsource its refugee challenges rather than accept that people will still try to come to the continent."

29. [Afghans flee in droves, but Germany closing the door](#) (IRIN, link):

"The number of Afghans making the journey to Europe has increased drastically over the past year. But the journey is fraught with danger.

There have been reports of migrants being violently attacked by bandits as they attempt to cross Iran. Health authorities in Nimruz, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject, told IRIN they had treated people who returned with gunshot wounds inflicted by Iranian border police.

If they do make it to Europe, they face an increasingly cool reception, even in Germany which has until now been the most welcoming country. Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière announced last week that Germany would tighten its policy on dealing with asylum applications from Afghans. He said many claiming asylum are from Afghanistan's middle class, and they should stay home to help rebuild their country.

Yet the situation in Afghanistan only appears to be getting worse. President Ashraf Ghani, who took power a year ago, has so far been unable to rein in corruption or enforce government control over much of the country."

30. [The illegalization and deportation of refugees in Tunisia](#) (by Debora Del Pistoia, Glenda Garelli, Martina Tazzioli) (November 2015) (link): *"The condition of asylum seekers and refugees in Tunisia is quite alarming, as the recent deportation to Algeria that we monitored in real-time and we report here below confirms."*

31. EU: Updated Justice and Home Affairs Council: 9 November 2015: [Draft Council conclusions on measures to handle the refugee and migration crisis](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13799-15, pdf)

Paragraph 17: ***"As part of an information strategy geared at reducing pull factors, it should be clearly explained that migrants must register in their first Member State of arrival; that, under EU law, asylum seekers have no right to choose the Member State responsible for examining their application; and that migrants without a need of protection will be swiftly returned. Furthermore, a clear message should be passed that migrants cannot refuse to cooperate with the relevant national authorities. Henceforth, all necessary measures will be taken by Member States to prevent, deter and draw the consequences of such movements and non-cooperation."***

32. 9 November: EU-AFRICA: Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015:

- Revised: [Valletta Summit Action Plan- Working Draft Five](#) (LIMITE doc no 13768-15, pdf)

- Revised: Declaration: [Valletta Summit Political Declaration \(Version One\)](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13767-15, pdf)

See: [EU and Africa still at loggerheads on Valletta accord](#) (euobserver, link): "Senior EU and African officials remain divided on readmission and legal migration ahead of the Valletta summit in Malta. The two sides have been thrashing out draft conclusions and political declarations in the lead up to a conference aimed at addressing the root causes of migration flows to the EU from the continent. "What remains to be discussed is certainly the issue of returns and readmission where some of our African partners are still looking for ways of redrafting some of the present version that is on the table," a senior EU official told reporters in Brussels on Monday (9 November).

African negotiators are also unhappy with a plan to issue special transit visas or EU laissez-passer documents for those sent home. The [EU laissez-passer](#) is a standard travel document for the expulsion of third-country nationals. Member states want it to become the standard for all those booted out of the EU. The African Union's ambassador to the EU, Ajay Bramdeo, last week said such a document was "unheard of in terms of international law and international practice. He said African nationals asked to leave the EU should only do so on a voluntary basis. "

33. EU-AFRICA: Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015: [Background Note](#) (pdf): Among the aims is to tackle "Root causes" which are wars, persecution and poverty. Another is: "Return and readmission

*Leaders are expected to make progress on **return arrangements and readmission agreements**. In particular, they should strengthen cooperation in order to facilitate the return and sustainable reintegration of irregular migrants, both from EU member states and associated countries and from African countries of transit and destination. The summit should also call for strengthening the capacity of authorities of countries of origin to respond to readmission applicants. **A special emphasis is expected to be put on identification and issuance of travel documents.**"*

The reference to "travel documents" is to the EU's proposal that EU-issued *Laissez-passer* documents be sufficient for returning refugees. The Council's legal basis is relying on [1994 Recommendations](#) (Statewatch [JHA Archive 1976-2000](#)) for issuing these co-called EU laissez-passer return documents which were adopted before the European or national parliaments had any say. Furthermore these "Conclusions" are "soft law", non-binding but enabling two or more Member States to undertake operational measures - again parliaments have no say. Measures which will have such a profound effect on refugee's rights and freedoms should be the subject of formal EU legislative procedures.

There are currently [17 readmission agreements](#) (link) are in force with the following countries: Hong Kong, Macao, Sri Lanka, Albania, Russia, Ukraine, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, Pakistan, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey (inoperative) and Cape Verde

See also: [Valletta Summit: Documentation](#)

34. Greece: Anti-racist Observatory of the University of the Aegean: [The Refugee issue: "Fortress Europe" and Solidarity](#) (pdf)

"This summer we experienced a real humanitarian crisis, a situation that could have led to an unprecedented tragedy if hundreds of volunteers had not been mobilised and had not offered their unconditional and continuous solidarity to those who came from the Middle East, Central and Southern Asia and North Africa and were heading towards Europe."

35. UK: [Police use anti-terrorism powers to detain UK volunteers taking aid to Calais refugee camp 6,000 people live in squalor near the Calais ferry terminal](#) (The Independent, link):

"British volunteers on a humanitarian aid run to refugees in Calais were detained by police under legislation meant to be used against suspected terrorists, an aid group has told the Independent. Two people working with the London2Calais group said they were stopped and held for three hours under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 while returning to the UK at Calais.

One of the pair, who were travelling in the same vehicle, said Kent Police counter-terror officers carried out the detention on the Calais side of the channel.

36. EU: ["Lack of cooperation" by refugees to be met, if necessary, with coercive measures including forced fingerprinting and detention](#)

Justice and Home Affairs Council, 9 November 2015: [Draft Council conclusions on measures to handle the refugee and migration crisis](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13738-15, pdf)

Paragraph 3: to "speed up the relocation process" or designate for "return"..This is about fast track asylum procedure or detention to induce people to apply for asylum as soon as they arrive rather than move towards other Member States, using coercive measures if they refuse.

*"Member States, to **overcome the potential lack of cooperation of migrants as they arrive into the European Union, and while fully respecting the fundamental rights and the principle of non-refoulement, will make full use of all possibilities provided by the EU acquis, such as (1) asylum procedures at borders or transit zones; (2) accelerated procedures; (3) nonadmissibility of subsequent asylum applications by the individuals concerned; (4) coercive measures, including, as a last resort, detention for a maximum period necessary for the completion of underlying procedures"***

"Coercive measures" also include: [Fingerprinting by force: secret discussions on "systematic identification" of migrants and asylum seekers - Including "fingerprinting \[with\] the use of a proportionate degree of coercion" on "vulnerable persons, such as minors or pregnant women"](#) (Statewatch)

Under paragraph 2 Greece and Italy will register people on arrival but move processing to their mainlands:

*"Italy and Greece will **substantially accelerate the preparatory steps for potential asylum seekers to be relocated.** The Council supports Italy and Greece in their decision to register migrants before further handling their case on the mainland, in particular with Eurodac machines provided by Member States."*

Para 7: *"upscaling [by 1 December 2015] the Poseidon Sea Joint Operation in Greece within the current operational plan"*

The shift of Poseidon operations on the Greece-Turkey border might save more lives but is also a precursor to blocking first and then sending people back to Turkey once it agrees to accept them.

See also: [Concept paper on the deployment of European Migration Liaison Officers](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13435-15,pdf): Known as "EMLOs" to gather information and intelligence and deals with returns and readmission.

The following countries have been designated to get EU EMLOs:

1. Egypt (regional mandate covering East and initially Horn of Africa)
2. Morocco
3. **Lebanon (covering Syria)**
4. Niger
5. Nigeria
6. Senegal (regional approach to be considered as regards reporting on neighbouring countries)

7. **Pakistan (regional mandate covering also Afghanistan)**
8. Serbia (regional approach to be considered for Western Balkans)
9. Ethiopia (regional mandate covering Horn of Africa, in particular Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti, South Sudan)
10. **Tunisia (covering Libya)**
11. Sudan (regional mandate covering Horn of Africa, in particular Eritrea which cannot be covered through Ethiopia)
12. Turkey
13. Jordan

Only Pakistan and Turkey (not operative) have readmission agreements with the EU. [emphasis added throughout]

37. [UN warns Cameron not to turn his back on refugees as winter nears](#) (Guardian, link): *"This is the moment our generation must act, says migration expert Peter Sutherland"*

38. EU: Council of the European Union: Extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council, 9 November 2015: [Background Note](#) (pdf) Discussing refugee crisis response. And [B Points Agenda](#) (French, pdf) for discussion and [A Points Agenda: non-legislative](#) (French, pdf), adopted without debate.

39. UNHCR: [Winterization Plan for the Refugee Crisis in Europe: November 2015 – February 2016](#) (pdf)

40. [Asylum Seeker's Death by Bulgarian Police Must Be Investigated](#) (liberties.eu, link): *"An asylum seeker is shot dead by police on the Bulgarian-Turkish border, but will justice come for the victim and his family? An Afghan man was shot down by a police officer and over 50 others were arrested near the Bulgarian – Turkish border in the evening of October 15, 2015. In connection with the incident, which took place near the town of Sredets, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee expressed the following position"*

41. EU: [European Commission: Refugee crisis statistics](#)

- [State of Play: Measures to Address the Refugee Crisis](#) (6-11.15, pdf) contains for first time data on:

- [Joint Frontex return flights](#) (pdf) Main countries are Pakistan and Nigeria

- [State of Play of Hotspot capacity](#) (Greece and Italy, pdf): "Total Reception Capacity: Lesbos: 700 (Moria) 780 (Kara Tepe) with Frontex: 54 Officers (Debriefing, screening, fingerprinters and registration teams. Border Surveillance Officers, Advance Level Document Officer)"

- [Member States' Support to Emergency Relocation Mechanism \(Communicated as of 29 October 2015\)](#) (pdf): "14 Member States 3,546 places (of 160,000)"

- [Member States' Support to Civil Protection Mechanism for Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia \(Communicated as of 6 November 2015\)](#) (pdf)

42. [Joint African and European recommendations for the Valletta Summit](#) (madenetwork.org, link): With this statement, African and European civil society set out priorities for the upcoming discussions and outcomes of the Valetta Summit:

"The African and European Civil Society Joint Statement is based on consultations conducted by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) Europe, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Caritas Senegal in its role as MADE Africa Coordinator with several African and European civil society platforms and organisations during September and October 2015. The statement comes ahead and in preparation of the Africa-Europe Valletta Summit on Migration on 11-12 November 2015, focused on reinforcing existing cooperation processes between Europe and Africa, particularly the Rabat and Khartoum processes on migration, and the EU-Africa Dialogue on Migration and Mobility. The Valletta Summit will result in a political declaration and an action plan."

[African and European Civil Society Joint Statement](#) (pdf)

43. [EU seeks autonomous drones, "data fusion" and "enhanced command and control centres" for border control](#)

The EU has made €24 million available for research into autonomous drones, "data fusion" and "enhanced command and control systems" in order to improve the surveillance of Europe's borders and "to support missions ranging from surveillance to detection of marine pollution incidents, and including early identification and tracking of illegal activities and illegal communication."

44. Italy: [Interior Ministry circular on the "relocation" procedure](#)

On 6 October 2015, the interior ministry sent a circular to the prefetti [government envoys responsible for security] outlining the provisional measures for international protection adopted for the benefit of Italy and Greece, including the start of "relocation" procedures. These instructions are in response to the decisions of the European Council meetings held on 14 and 22 September 2015.

Asylum seekers "in clear need of protection", belonging to nationalities whose recognition of international protection is above 75% according to the last quarter's Eurostat data, may enter the "relocation" procedure.

45. European Commission: [Progress following Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting: Second Contact Points Video Conference](#) (pdf):

"Frontex and the Commission insisted on the importance of the relevant countries responding to the proposed operational plans from Frontex to enable Frontex to deploy its teams by mid-November in Greece and Croatia."

46. [Europe must act now on refugee deaths](#) (IRR, link):

"As borders become militarised zones, and internal policing of refugees and migrants intensifies, the IRR continues to monitor asylum- and migration- related deaths.... In the absence of an effective accountability mechanism, it is up to us to call EU states to account. When state responsibility is engaged following a death, why do we not know even the names, ages, nationalities of a large number of the dead? Is anyone held accountable, and if not, why not? The IRR will continue to monitor deaths in order to help campaigners in their demands for structures of accountability for the deaths inside Europe, caused by Europe's response to refugees and migrants."

47. Yet another emergency EU Summit (Heads of State): [Invitation Letter from Council President Tusk to Members of the European Council](#) (pdf) to be held on 12 November at 14.30 straight after the Valletta EU-Africa Summit and there is also to be another extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council on 9 November 2015. President Tusk concerned at some EU states introducing "different measures at internal Schengen borders"

48. EU: European Commission: [State of Play: Measures to Address the Refugee Crisis](#) (3 November 2015, pdf) Details figures on funding, "hotspots" (Greece and Italy) and returns

49. EU: [Commissioner Avramopoulos and Minister Asselborn in Athens: First Relocation Flight from Greece](#) (pdf):

"On Wednesday 4 November, Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos and Luxembourg Minister for Foreign Affairs Jean Asselborn will travel to Greece. Together with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, European Parliament President Martin Schulz and Greek Alternate Minister of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction responsible for Migration Policy Ioannis Mouzalas they will meet with the first group of asylum seekers to benefit from the EU's relocation scheme from Greece. Thirty asylum seekers will travel by plane from the Athens International Airport to have their applications processed in Luxembourg."

Tony Bunyan, Statewatch Director comments:

"Instead of turning the first relocation flight from Greece into a photo-opportunity the Commissioner would be employed sorting out the mess at home in Brussels by tackling the lack of humanitarian aid and civil protection on the beaches and camps in Greece and right up through the centre of the EU and by getting member states to come up with the number of refugees they are going to "relocate" and when."

50. EU: [Letter from European Commission and Council to Member States](#) (30.10.15, pdf)
Outlines where EU Member States response to the refugee crisis is "still falling short":

- The European Asylum Support Office needs the secondment of 374 experts, so far it has only 153 promises, Frontex needs 775 border guards and so far has 353 from nineteen states

- the Syria Crisis Trust Fund needs 500 million euro - it has 50 million euro

- the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: EU funding will reach 1.8 billion euro which should be matched by EU Member States - so far:

"the contrast with Member State' pledges of below 30 million euro is stark. In the run-up to the Valletta Summit, it is indispensable that the national effort comes closer to the EU funding"

51. UK-EU refugee crisis and humanitarian emergency: House of Lords, Select Committee on the European Union report: [EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling](#) (pdf):

"Evidence suggests that a majority of those currently entering the EU as irregular migrants are 'prima facie refugees', as defined by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. It is, therefore, important that as much focus is placed on the humanitarian aspects of the crisis as on law enforcement..."

*We recommend that, as part of its review of EU legislation, the Commission should propose an EU framework that builds on the humanitarian aspects of the UN Protocol that concerns migrant smuggling. It should criminalise only acts committed for financial gain. **Clauses should be added to avoid the criminalisation of individuals and organisations acting for humanitarian purposes.** Inhuman and degrading treatment should be included as aggravating factors in the sentencing of smugglers."* [emphasis added]

52. [Refugee Rescued With His Cat Exposes "Dangerous And Unlivable" Conditions In German Camp](#) (Buzzfeed, link):

"It is like a prison here," said Moner Al Kadri, a refugee from Syria who gained internet fame when pictures of him with his kitten he brought across the Mediterranean on a life raft were posted on Facebook... The couple is now in a large refugee camp in Suhl, a city in eastern Germany's federal state of Thuringia. The conditions, Al Kadri said, are deplorable. Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans, and other families fleeing Middle East conflicts pad through inches of water to get to the bathroom and receive small food rations, and they are subject to spreading diseases."

53. [Greek conscripts: 'we won't take part in fighting migrants'](#) (libcom.org):

"A collective statement on the migrant crisis from "Diktyo Spartakos" ("Spartacus Net"), a far leftist formation inside the Greek army, and signed by conscript soldiers from 50 different units.

The following inspirational statement deserves the widest possible circulation. It is from Greek conscripts in 50 units of the Armed Forces. The statement is notable for linking all the current horrors inflicted on workers everywhere to a single cause – the ongoing crisis of the capitalist system. In this crisis, which demands sacrifices in lost and ruined lives, all workers, whatever their condition, have a common cause and a common interest.. "

54. UK: [Ottley aid worker could face jail for smuggling 4-year-old back to family](#) (ITV News, with videos link): *"Rob Lawrie tried to smuggle four-year-old Bahar from the infamous Jungle refugee*

camp in Calais to relatives in Leeds after her father pleaded with him to take her in his van. He persuaded a Yorkshire aid volunteer to try to take her to family in Leeds - Rob Lawrie's now due in court for this - he will appear in January in Boulogne charged with smuggling."

55. EU-AFRICA:Refugee crisis: [Valletta Conference 11-12 November 2015: Update: Latest and full documentation](#) and

See: [EXCLUSIVE. EU-Africa: Valletta, the summit of dissent](#) (afronline.org, link) and also: [African and European Civil Society Joint Statement: Valletta Summit, 11-12 November, 2015](#) (thanks to afronline.org, pdf)

Documents

[Valletta Summit Political Declaration Version Zero](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13384-15, 23 October 2015, pdf)

[Valletta Summit Action Plan - Working Draft Four](#) (LIMITE doc no 12560-rev-3-15, 26 October 2015, pdf)

[Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015](#) (LIMITE doc no: 13153-15, 16 October 2015, pdf)

[Valletta Summit Action Plan - Working Draft Three](#) (LIMITE doc no: 12560-rev-2-15, 12 October 2015, pdf)

[Valletta Summit Action Plan - Working Draft Two](#) (LIMITE doc no 12560-rev-1-15, 7 October 2015, pdf)

1st version: [Possible elements for the Outcome Document for Valletta - annotated version](#) (LIMITE doc no 11534-15, 26 August 2015, pdf)

Background

GAMM-AFRICA: [EU Action on Migratory Pressures - A Strategic Response 5th Biannual Update](#) (LIMITE doc no: 16600-14, pdf)

[Draft Council Conclusions on the EU Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan 2015-2020](#) (28 pages, LIMITE doc no: 13200-15, pdf)

""[T]hree issues affecting EU interests in the region have gained particular salience: the influence of the wider region on the Horn of Africa, violent extremism and migration and forced displacement...

"The high number of people in the region who are willing to migrate is by far larger than the limited possibilities of legal avenues for migration, be it within the region or outside. Lack of opportunities for legal migration or complex and expensive procedures mean that many migrants feel that they have no other option than to use irregular channels."

See also: [EU: Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria prioritised for "pilot initiative on return"](#) (Statewatch database)

56. LESVOS, GREECE: [We are Ifieguards and we are saving lives](#) (link): *"We are Proactiva Open Arms, a NGO from Badalona (Barcelona, Spain) and we are dedicated to saving lives in the sea. In the beginning of September we decided to move to the Island of Lesvos to help the refugees that arrive to the Greek coast."*

57. [Grcka je hot-spot za izbjeglice, a mi privremeno utocište](#) (slobodnadalmacija.hr, link) [Greece is a hotspot for refugees, and we have temporary shelter]

"According to Ranko Ostoji, Croatian Minister of Interior, during a statement at the press (30 October 2015), there will be only a hot Spot Greece, while the other Balkan countries have the task to provide a temporary home to people crossing their territory. Applicants to be returned will be evicted and

those who have refugee status will be let in to go to countries of the EU.[machine translation]
Comment: How "temporary" will be "temporary"? The Minister is describing a "hotspot".

58. EU: [Another step after months and months of dithering: Entropy or incompetence?](#) IPCR (Integrated Political Crisis Response) is the joint responsibility of the European Commission and European External Action Service (EEAS): Council of the European Union Press release: 30 October: [Migratory crisis: EU Council Presidency steps up information sharing between member states by activating IPCR](#) (pdf):

"The EU Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements (IPCR) reinforce the European Union's ability to take rapid decisions when facing major crises requiring a response at EU political level."

See: [Finalisation of the CCA review process: the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response \(IPCR\) arrangement](#) (2013, pdf)

"Some major emergencies or crises, of internal and/or external origin are of such a wideranging impact or political significance, that they require timely policy coordination and response at EU political level. This could result from the number of affected or involved Member States, or the cross-sectorial nature of the crisis, the imminence thereof, or from time constraints, or a combination of these factors...." [emphasis added]

and: [Concept Note on "Arrangements for Crisis Coordination at EU political level"](#) (2012, pdf):

"whether the CCA [EU Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangement] in its current configuration is the politically and strategically agile tool required by the EU as a whole to respond quickly and adequately to a serious crisis situation; as appropriate, develop proposals that incorporate all relevant EU level actors and crisis coordination tools...." [emphasis added]

59. IOM [Mediterranean Update](#) (link): Number of arrivals: **724,228, with 579,642 in Greece and 140,636 in Italy** (30 October):

"With the latest tragic drownings in the Aegean on Wednesday and Thursday—along with four new deaths reported today off Spain—IOM now estimates that the total number of migrant deaths on Mediterranean sea routes to Europe have surpassed 3,329 in the first ten months of 2015."

60. Greece: [Death toll in migrant boat shipwrecks rises to 22](#) (ekathimerini.com, link): ***"At least 22 people drowned in two new shipwrecks in the Aegean Sea Friday as thousands of Middle Eastern refugees and economic migrants sought to reach the Greek islands in rough seas, while the death toll over the past three days has reached nearly 50."***

61. [Tsipras slams EU response to migrant crisis as death toll rises](#) (ekathimerini.com, link): With frightening picture of a refugee boat listing: ***"At least 22 migrants, among them 13 children, drowned overnight when two boats sank off the islands of Kalymnos and Rhodes, Greek port officials said on Friday. The latest drownings prompted a sharp response from Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras who said he felt "shame" over Europe's failure to prevent the tragedies. "Our first duty is to save lives and not to allow the Aegean to become a cemetery... for that we are not asking for even a euro" from our European partners, he said."***

[Tsipras says level of EU debate on migrants is 'sad'](#) ((ekathimerini.com, link):

"Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras slammed on Friday the level of debate among European Union governments in dealing with the migrant crisis as 'sad' for a lack of cohesive action in dealing with the crisis. "I feel shamed as a member of this European leadership, both for the inability of Europe in dealing with this human drama, and for the level of debate at a senior level, where one is passing the buck to the other," Tsipras told Parliament."

"These are hypocritical, crocodile tears which are being shed for the dead children on the shores of the Aegean. Dead children always incite sorrow, But what about the children that are alive who come in thousands and are stacked on the streets? Nobody likes them."

[Tsipras: Unlike Hungary, Athens will help resolve the refugee crisis](#) ((euractiv, link): "**Greece will help the EU tackle the refugee crisis, despite certain member states' unwillingness to contribute**, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said on Thursday (29 October)... Referring to the latest tragedy, the premier said it was a "humanitarian duty" to address the situation.,,, The Greek leader believes that the EU border agency Frontex should be reinforced, and reacted strongly to recent suggestions that Greece conduct joint patrols with Turkey in the Aegean."

62. "**[The Europe We Want!](#)** **[Refugee crisis: Here's a 'to do list' for the refugee crisis from Strasbourg's human rights watchdogs](#)** (europesworld.org, link): by Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights: "Migration is the most controversial issue in Europe of this decade. It is creating new divisions between European countries and is feeding the widespread euroscepticism that far-right political movements have so promptly exploited...."

63. ECRE/AIDA: **[The new asylum procedure at the border and restrictions to accessing protection in Hungary](#)** (pdf):

"increasing pressure has triggered a series of changes in the Hungarian asylum system which raises multiple legal and policy concerns. At the same time, Hungary appears to be a transit country for a large number, if not most, of refugees and asylum seekers arriving there, who seek to continue their journey towards other European countries...."

the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) has sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the new border procedure applied at the Hungarian border and the conditions facing asylum seekers in the new transit zones. This enquiry is followed by an assessment of the treatment afforded to persons who enter the country irregularly, as well as by a discussion on the broader effects of the recent restrictions imposed by Hungary for refugees seeking protection in Europe "

64. **[Sweden to keep shelters for asylum seekers secret](#)** (euractiv, link): "**The Swedish Migration Agency has decided to keep the locations of refugee housing facilities secret, following 21 being torched since March.**

Yesterday, the municipality of Danderyd, a town located north of Stockholm, announced that a new residence for 70 asylum seekers will be opened in November, in facilities that previously belonged to a public school. But around 2AM this morning (28 October), the building was set alight. On Tuesday (27 October), a building that was meant to be used for refugee accommodations in Färingtofta, in southern Sweden, was likewise destroyed in an arson attack.

In order to prevent more fires, the Migration Agency has decided to make it harder for the public to locate the addresses of planned homes for asylum seekers. This means that 66,000 residences will be kept a secret. "The level of security has deteriorated and it's worrying with all these fires. We will keep the residences a secret so that they won't become common knowledge," said Willis Åberg, operations manager at the Migration Agency, according to Radio Sweden" [emphasis in original].

65. Greece: Lesbos: **[Death Toll Still Rising!! 29/10/2015](#)** (Youtube, link) by Eric Kempson, heart-rending report

66. EU: **Civil protection mechanism activated at last? [EU struggles with migration edicts](#)** (politico, link): "Greece recoils at demands to "create a ghetto for 50,000 refugees." and see: **[EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)** (link)

[Greece may seek EU help to meet migration pledges](#) (ekathimerini.com, link): "Sources told Kathimerini that authorities were mulling a request that the European Union's civil protection mechanism be activated to help Greece meet the targets. The mechanism coordinates the bloc's

humanitarian aid efforts, channeling financial support and sending specially equipped teams to disaster areas.

"We had been prepared for 2,500 places – not for 20,000 in two months and another 20,000 via the rent-assistance program," a source who wished to remain anonymous told the newspaper."

67. Opening remarks by Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies, Maison de la Paix, Geneva: [Lessons from the Syrian Refugee Crisis: Towards New Global Coordination 27 October 2015](#) (Full-text, pdf)

and see: [Derogatory speech against migrants can lead to murders, UN official warns](#) (euractiv, link): "Politicians who use derogatory language about refugees and migrants may be responsible for causing violence and racism, UN Human Rights Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein warned yesterday (27 October). "Once you classify people along lines such that they pose a threat - that these are 'hordes', that we are being 'invaded', that there are 'swarms' of people coming, you have started the process of dehumanizing them as we know from history," he said." and [U.N.'s Zeid says politicians' anti-migrant rhetoric can be deadly](#) (Reuters, link)

68. [Frontex begins testing accelerated registration process in Lesbos](#) (link)

"Frontex began testing a new accelerated process of identifying and registering migrants on the Greek island of Lesbos today. The entire process takes place at a mobile office, set up as part of the implementation of the "hotspot" approach. Inside, a team composed of two Frontex guest officers works together with Greek authorities to register migrants and provide them with information on international protection.

More than 35 people, including several Syrian families, have already passed through the new facilities established by Frontex in Moria, where they were **registered and had their fingerprints scanned electronically with a Eurodac device. At the end of the process, a European Asylum Support Office (EASO) official explained the possibility of requesting international protection and the relocation mechanism.**" [emphasis added]

69. AUSTRIA-European Commission: [Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2015 evaluation of the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of Return by Austria](#) (LIMITE doc, pdf):

"Austria should:

(1) improve the collection and provision of data and statistics in the field of return policy...

(3) review the current law and practice as regards the procedural rights and treatment of unaccompanied minors belonging to various age-groups to make the rules clearer both for the minors and for staff dealing with them in the return procedure.

(4) bring the rules on the maximum period of detention fully in line with the return acquis (the maximum period should not exceed 18 months)...

(7) make the facilities and detention regime at Rossauer Lände and Hernalser Gürtel more suitable for detaining irregular migrants; ensure that the open regime is the general rule (and consider the amendment of the PAZ centres' in-house rules accordingly) and that detainees in solitary confinement are not denied the right to visits and outdoor exercise.

(8) find a more appropriate solution for holding returnees in pre-removal detention that have special medical needs either in ordinary hospitals or in suitably equipped specialised detention centres for returnees.

(9) review the monitoring system to allow for monitoring of the in-flight phase when commercial flights are used for forced returns..."

70. EU-Afghanistan: the EU is trying to "return" refugees there: See: Foreign Affairs Council (26.10.15): Adopted [Conclusions](#) (link) include:

"The European Union stands firm in its commitment to Afghanistan and its people in this critical phase. The past months have seen a serious security situation, renewed terrorist attacks with record numbers of civilian casualties, and the concomitant internal displacement and exodus of thousands of Afghans, putting mounting pressure on the region and the European Union."

71. [Refugees on Slovenia-Croatia border – drone video footage](#) (Guardian, link): "Aerial footage shows the scale of migration at the Slovenian-Croatian border, where hundreds of refugees are seen crossing farmland on foot on Sunday. The Balkan route switched to Slovenia after Hungary closed its border"

72. [Turkish fishermen rescue baby: 'Brother, he is alive'](#) (CNN,link): "The footage was shot recently in the Aegean Sea, off the coast of Kusadasi, Turkey. A boat carrying migrants capsized, according to Turkey's Dogan News Agency (DHA). The video shows fishermen approaching what looks to be a floating life jacket. A baby boy is inside. One of the men pulls the child out of the water and strips off his life jacket, turning the boy over and upside down in an apparent attempt to clear water from the boy's lungs. He wraps the child in a blanket."

73. 25-10-15: Final Statement: [Leaders' Meeting on refugee flows along the Western Balkans Route: Leaders' Statement](#) (pdf):

Greece to build camps to hold 30,000 refugees plus 20,000 in rented homes and UNHCR a further 50,000 further north

- *"Under the current circumstances, we will **discourage the movement of refugees or migrants to the border of another country** of the region. **A policy of waving through refugees without informing a neighbouring country is not acceptable.** This should apply to all countries along the route..."*

- ***Greece's intention to increase reception capacity to 30.000 places by the end of the year and commit to supporting Greece and UNHCR to provide rent subsidies and host family programmes for at least 20.000 more.** Financial support for Greece and the UNHCR is expected. This is an important precondition to make the emergency relocation system work..."*

- *We will work with the UNHCR who has committed to support our efforts in improving our capacities. An **additional capacity of 50.000** would allow for a better and more predictable management of the flow....*

- *We will work with the European Commission and Frontex to step up practical cooperation on readmission with third countries; cooperation will be intensified with **Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan**, in particular in the area of returns....*

- *Upscaling the Poseidon Sea Joint Operation in Greece, in particular **Frontex's presence in the Aegean Sea**, and strengthening significantly Frontex support to Greece in registering and fingerprinting activities...*

- *We reconfirm the principle that a country **may refuse entry to third country nationals who, when presenting themselves at border crossing points, do not confirm a wish to apply for international protection** (in line with international and EU refugee law, subject to a prior non-refoulement and proportionality check)...*

It should be noted that there is **nothing further on "relocation"**

The European Commission has called a meeting - mini-summit- in Brussels of the leaders of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia: [Leaders' Meeting on the Western Balkans Route: Draft Leaders' Statement](#) (pdf): Note this "Draft" was circulated on Saturday 24 October the day before the meeting organised by the Commission.

News: Sunday 25 October 2015: [Slovenia sees end to EU if leaders fail on migrant plan](#) (Reuters, link): "The European Union is set to deploy more than 400 border guards within a week to help tackle a migrant crisis in the western Balkans, according to a draft statement to be considered later on Sunday by leaders from central and eastern Europe." and [EU mini-summit seeks unity in Balkans over migrant crisis](#) (Reuters, link) and [Migrant crisis: Emergency talks on Balkans under way](#) (BBC, link)

74. [Frontex slows down registration procedures in "Hot Spot" Moria, leaving refugees for days in life-threatening conditions](#) (w2eu.net, link):

"Since Frontex has entered the scene, registration processes were dramatically slowed down. Frontex procedures of 'screening' individuals takes a long time which has caused great delays and thus created a situation of humanitarian emergency for the hundreds of people waiting outside. The official opening of this hotspot on Lesbos coincided with increased numbers of new arrivals and deteriorating weather conditions..."

The ongoing tragedy in the "Hot Spot" and around, mirrors the failure of Europe to protect refugees and the violence of the border regime on which European Migration policies are based. Screening and registration are priority, peoples' lives are not.

We demand the immediate end of hotspot procedures and the instant withdrawal of Frontex personnel. The EU has to immediately put an end to the slowing-down of registration procedures produced by Frontex which is life-threatening. We denounce the procedure of 'speeding up returns' in the strongest possible terms." and:

[Moria/Lesbos: Rain-sodden feet, frozen white hands, hypothermic pregnant women and trampled down children](#) (w2eu.net, link):

"The "Hot Spot" of horror is what Moria turned to the last week and since its inauguration when numbers of new arrivals were high and the weather conditions harsh with constant rain falls. The authorities together with the UNHCR and all other involved actors of the humanitarian aid regime failed in protecting hundreds of refugees from what was a predictable catastrophe." [emphasis in original]

75. EU: ["Returns" package](#)

Under the so-called "hotspot" process refugees are first "nationality screened" (national officials lead by Frontex) and then divided into two groups: a) those to be returned and held in "closed" camps (they have no legal representation or right of appeal) and b) those to be "relocated" within the EU who are "asylum" processed, by EASO and national officials, to be held in "open" camps.

1. European Commission: [CONTACT GROUP "Return Directive" \(2008/115/EC\) 14 October 2014: Preparation of Return Handbook](#) (80 pages, pdf)

2. European Commission: [Recommendation: Preparation of Returns Handbook](#) (COM 6250, pdf)

3. European Commission: [ANNEX: Return Handbook](#) (116 pages, pdf): *"The content of this handbook deals essentially with standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals and is based on EU legal instruments regulating this issue (in particular the Return Directive 2008/115/EC)."*

4. European Commission: [EU Action Plan on return](#) (COM 453-15, pdf)

5. [Addressing the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Role of EU External Action](#) (Commission and EEAS, pdf)

6. [Council conclusions on the future of the return policy](#) (pdf):

"Member States must systematically issue return decisions, take all necessary steps to enforce them and provide adequate resources, including funding and staff, necessary for identifying and returning illegally staying third-country nationals. All measures must be taken to ensure irregular migrants' effective return, including use of detention as a legitimate measure of last resort. In particular, Member States should reinforce their pre-removal detention capacity to ensure the physical availability of irregular migrants for return and take steps to prevent the abuse of rights and procedures."

7. [Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals](#) (pdf)

8. [Council of Europe: Guidelines on forced returns](#) (pdf)

76. Czech Republic: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: [Zeid urges Czech Republic to stop detention of migrants and refugees](#) (pdf)

*"The High Commissioner expressed concerns that the authorities continue to practice this policy, even though those detainees who have been able to challenge the detention in court have been released. He noted that **most detained migrants and refugees are not in a position to swiftly challenge their detention in court – as is their right -- because they do not receive information about free legal aid** and because civil society organizations that work with refugees have reportedly been receiving very restricted access to detention facilities like Bilá-Jezová (80 km north of Prague)."* [emphasis added]

and: [Czech ombudsman criticises conditions in refugee facility](#) (pdf):

*"The severe conditions which children and families with children have to endure in Belá-Jezová constitute a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Objectively speaking, children in the facility have worse living conditions than inmates in Czech prisons. Belá-Jezová is a former military facility where the living conditions are, in many ways, much worse than those in Czech prisons. Prison inmates are people who committed a crime and were convicted for it. On the other hand, **the people in Belá have not been convicted of any crime and no sentence has been imposed on them. The fact that hundreds of children are detained in this facility goes against our notion of the Czech Republic as a civilised country.**"* [emphasis added]

[Full-text of Ombudsman report](#) (pdf)

Also: [UN: Czechs violate refugee rights to deter others](#) (euobserver, link)

77. [Greece Records Highest Weekly Migration Inflows in 2015 So Far](#) (IOM, link):

" This week IOM Greece recorded the highest migration inflows since the beginning of 2015. Despite deteriorating weather conditions, approximately 48,000 refugees and migrants crossed from Turkey to the Greek islands – or about 9,600 migrants and refugees in each of the past five days.... The influx has left many local authorities unprepared. The island of Lesbos continues to receive the highest percentage of refugees and migrants. Some 27,276 reached the island during the period, while 9,750 arrived in Chios."

This year up to 22 October **139,518 refugees have arrived in Italy and 537.460 refugees arrived in Greece:**

"Data for Greece are derived by the new and updated data collected by IOM Regional Staff in Greece and Greek authorities (1/1/2015 – 20/10/2015). Numbers are not the actual daily arrivals but the number of migrants who have officially been recorded by the Greek authorities after their arrival."

78. EU: [Commission Issues Opinion on Temporary Reintroduction of Controls at Internal Borders: Germany and Austria acting in compliance with Schengen Borders Code](#) (Press release, pdf): "The Commission has concluded that the initial reintroduction of controls at internal borders by Germany and Austria, as well as the subsequent prolongations, are in compliance with the Schengen Borders Code."

79. Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights: [Second Annual Report: 2014](#) (pdf) and [First Annual Report: 2013](#) (pdf)

81. [Europe, please act! An Open Letter to the Governments of Europe](#) (link):

"We, the front-line volunteers who for months now have been helping thousands of refugees, call on all the governments of Europe to act immediately and decisively to alleviate the situation...."

Winter is coming quickly and we all have just a few days to respond in a humane way.

We call on all European countries to provide immediate help to all those countries affected by the refugee crisis, instead of helping those countries that are building fences.

We call for the building of safe reception and transit centres with facilities that can cope with the harsh winter conditions of the region.

We also call for humanitarian aid to be delivered to the people that need it, for the provision of appropriate medical services and for the coordination of all efforts on a pan-European level.

We also call on the EU to immediately implement other mechanisms which aim to provide safe passage to the EU."

82. [Boat refugees been sunk five times](#) (link): Great interview by Eric Kempson (Lesvos) on the shameful EU role and that of Turkish coastguard.

See also: Masked Greek Coastguards again? [Attacks on Boats Risk Migrant Lives](#) (HRW, link):

"Armed masked men have been disabling boats carrying migrants and asylum seekers in the Aegean Sea and pushing them back to Turkish waters, Human Rights Watch said today.

Human Rights Watch spoke to nine witnesses who described eight incidents in which masked assailants – often armed – intercepted and disabled the boats carrying asylum seekers and migrants from Turkey toward the Greek islands, most recently on October 7 and 9, 2015. The witnesses said that the assailants deliberately disabled their boats by damaging or removing the engines or their fuel, or puncturing the hulls of inflatable boats. In some cases, the boats were towed to Turkish waters".

[Boats from Greece confront refugees at sea with guns](#) (Youtube, link): "Published on Sep 8, 2015 CBS News has obtained video showing a group of men on a boat confronting migrants at sea near the Greek coastline. The men cut the migrants' fuel lines, leaving them stranded at sea. CBS News correspondent Holly Williams reports."

83. EU: [Valletta Conference 11-12 November 2015: Update and background](#)

[Valletta Summit Action Plan - Working Draft Three](#) (LIMITE doc no: 12560-rev-2-15, pdf) and: [Draft Council Conclusions on the EU Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan 2015-2020](#) (28 pages, LIMITE doc no: 13200-15,pdf)

""[T]hree issues affecting EU interests in the region have gained particular salience: the influence of the wider region on the Horn of Africa, violent extremism and migration and forced displacement...

"The high number of people in the region who are willing to migrate is by far larger than the limited possibilities of legal avenues for migration, be it within the region or outside. Lack of opportunities for legal migration or complex and expensive procedures mean that many migrants feel that they have no other option than to use irregular channels."

See also: [EU: Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria prioritised for "pilot initiative on return"](#) (Statewatch database)

84. European Parliament Study: [EU cooperation with third countries in the field of migration](#) (pdf):

"This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the LIBE Committee, reflects on the imbalances of EU external action as well as on the lack of evidence on the impact and efficiency of EU funding regarding the objectives of the migration policy, which are sometimes conflicting with the development goals.

The study brings forward recommendations for rationalization and coordination of action, more balance between the different components of the GAMM, more transparency for a better evaluation and scrutiny, and a reinforced partnership approach with third countries."

85. European Commission: [President Juncker calls Leaders' Meeting in Brussels on refugee flows along the Western Balkans route](#) (pdf) Leaders from the following countries have been summoned: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

and see: [Balkan summit highlights Juncker-Tusk leadership gap](#) (euobserver, link): "By calling a mini summit on Sunday (25 October), European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker has decided to push forward the Commission's role in addressing the migrant crisis. By doing so, he has also highlighted an apparently widening gap with the president of the European Council Donald Tusk, a fellow member of the centre-right EPP party."

and yet another "Extra" Justice and Home Council has been called on 9 November, in Brussels.

86. Fundamental Rights Agency: [Fundamental rights implications of the obligation to provide fingerprints for Eurodac](#) (link) and see: [Report](#) (pdf): "The swift identification and registration of asylum seekers is an important measure to ensure their protection. Under EU law, registration procedures also include taking fingerprints. To help authorities ensure fingerprinting practices do not violate fundamental rights, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has produced a 10-point checklist for rights compliance in its latest Focus paper."

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