



Department: Directorate of Information & Communication

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AU Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## **Press Statement**

### **On Denmark's Alien Act provision to Externalize Asylum procedures to third countries**

The African Union condemns in the strongest terms possible, Denmark's Aliens Act, which was passed recently and which provides for Denmark to relocate asylum seekers to countries outside the European Union while their cases are being processed. This law effectively externalizes and exports the asylum process beyond the borders of Denmark. Denmark has decided to send applications for international protection outside its borders; which amounts to responsibility and burden shifting.

The African Union views this law with the gravest of concerns and wishes to remind Denmark of its responsibility towards international protection for persons in need of that protection as provided for in the 1951 UN Convention on refugees, to which Denmark is a state party.

Africa has a lot to show to the world as it continues to generously shoulder the burden of the world's 85% of the refugees, often in protracted situations, whereas only 15% are hosted by developed countries.

In addition, the African Union notes with great concern attempts and proposals to establish similar arrangements in Africa through bilateral arrangements, which is worrying and unacceptable. The African Union perceives such attempts as an extension of the borders of such countries and an extension of their control to the African shores. Such attempts to stem out migration from Africa to Europe is xenophobic and completely unacceptable.

Denmark's Aliens Act will successfully allow Denmark to abdicate its international responsibility to provide asylum and protection to those that enter its territory, and will play to distort the international asylum regime as well as pave the way for more wealthy and developed countries that only host 15% of the global refugees, to shift their responsibilities to the developing countries who already have a burden of hosting 85% of the global refugees while struggling with other challenges. Such a practice would not support the principle of equitable burden and responsibility sharing as envisioned in the Global Compact on Refugees and is also unsustainable.

We call on all State Parties to the 1951 UN Convention to remain true and faithful to their commitment and obligations to the international asylum system and encourage them to protect the asylum space and stop intolerance and shunning of responsibility especially over migrants and asylum seekers from outside Europe.

2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia