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Forced migration: a new challenge

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Philippe BIES and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

In its last annual global trends report published in June 2013, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees notes that population movements in 2012 involved over 45.2 million people.

While war is the prime cause of these migratory movements, which are constantly on the increase, it is far from being the sole factor forcing children, women and men to leave their everyday surroundings for another geographical area within or outside the borders of their country of origin.

In international law, only refugee status, defined in Article 1A, §2 of the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees, opens up the possibility of international protection for displaced persons. Today, this definition, hinging on persecution or a well-founded fear thereof, no longer covers a growing number of cases where the migrant has taken a decision to move or been forced to do so by a factor beyond their control.

These forced migrations are prompted by new causes: natural, environmental and chemical disasters, consequences of climate change, food insecurity, development policies and projects (major urban developments, roads, airports, ports, etc). They are also engendered by fragile States which do not oppress their people but have failings that render them incapable of providing for fundamental rights and needs on their territory.

The Parliamentary Assembly should closely examine the changing nature of migrant movements and the underlying constraints. The growing migratory pressure that will come to bear on the European continent and, therefore, on member States must be anticipated and will require changes to national legislations. Our Organisation has a duty to draw the full consequences of recognising the phenomenon of forced migration by adapting its array of fundamental rights protection measures.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

BIES Philippe, France, SOC
ANDREOLI Paride, San Marino, SOC
BİLGEHAN Gülsün, Turkey, SOC
BOCKEL Jean-Marie, France, EPP/CD
BRASSEUR Anne, Luxembourg, ALDE
CORSINI Paolo, Italy, SOC
CROZON Pascale, France, SOC
DUMERY Daphné, Belgium, NR
FLEGO Gvozden Srećko, Croatia, SOC
FRÉCON Jean-Claude, France, SOC
GIOVAGNOLI Gerardo, San Marino, SOC
GOZI Sandro, Italy, NR
GUZENINA-RICHARDSON Maria, Finland, SOC
HENRY Olivier, Belgium, SOC
IWIŃSKI Tadeusz, Poland, SOC
JÓNASSON Ögmundur, Iceland, UEL
KYRIAKIDOU Athina, Cyprus, SOC
LE BORGNIER Pierre-Yves, France, SOC
MAHOUX Philippe, Belgium, SOC
MULIĆ Melita, Croatia, SOC
RECORDON Luc, Switzerland, SOC
ROUQUET René, France, SOC
STRIK Tineke, Netherlands, SOC
VORUZ Eric, Switzerland, SOC
ZANETTI Paola, France, SOC

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group