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A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

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

Over a million people arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean in 2015, and this figure is unlikely to decrease significantly as the conflicts and the resulting human rights violations continue. On the contrary, during the first two months of 2016, over 100 000 migrants and refugees had already reached Europe compared to 12 000 in the same period of 2015.

The on-going crisis has clearly revealed systemic weaknesses in the existing mechanisms confronted with the massive arrival of refugees and asylum-seekers, ranging from border controls to reception and registration processes and from rapid reaction and solidarity to integration, at national, regional and European levels. Moreover, it has disclosed strong divisions among Council of Europe member States according to their politics and geographical positions.

This unprecedented crisis has shown the urgent need for a common humanitarian and political response at the European level, taking into account the positions of different governments while complying with human rights principles. Such a response would have to address the management of migration flows, fair repartition of responsibilities, integration and return policies while dealing with root causes of migration.

The Parliamentary Assembly, which co-operates with parliamentarians from countries of origin, transit and host countries, could serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas, opinions and experiences. In this context, the Assembly's Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons organised a conference on 15 December 2015 on "A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe", where participants took stock of different national and international situations, discussed how to improve co-operation with countries of origin and first asylum and explored short- and medium-term political solutions.

The Assembly should build on the conclusions of this conference to extract common principles for co-operation and coordinated action.

