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Human rights impact of the "external dimension" of European Union asylum and migration policy: out of sight, out of mind?

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Tineke STRIK and other members of the Assembly

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

In combating irregular migration, the European Union is expanding its co-operation with many countries of origin and transit, especially those in Africa, South-East Europe and the Middle-East, and with Afghanistan and Pakistan. The European Commission is concluding agreements in which these third countries promise to strengthen border controls and accept returnees from the European Union in exchange for trade, visa or financial support. Under the New Partnership Framework, the European Union has shifted its emphasis from positive incentives to sanctions: non-co-operation can lead to less funds, trade or development aid.

Very little is known about the actual impact on migrants of this co-operation and conditionality principle. Do these partner countries have an adequate level of human rights? If refugees are stuck in a partner country or returned there, do they have access to sufficient protection and social rights? Will transit countries close their borders to refugees, or return them to a possible unsafe place? And if this 'shifting out' policy is adopted by more countries, will refugees still be able to leave their country? The most urgent question perhaps is who is responsible when the cooperation leads to violations of human rights.

As human rights impact assessments or monitoring procedures are lacking, the Parliamentary Assembly should fill this gap, particularly since the Council of Europe includes countries of origin, transit and destination.

The Assembly should assess what happens concerning migrants' rights when countries co-operate on migration with a view to making recommendations to member States and the European Union on how agreements on migration can go hand in hand with securing human rights.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. 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