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The crackdown on human rights defenders and NGOs in the field of refugee rescue, support and integration

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Michel BRANDT and other members of the Assembly

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

In [Resolution 2305 \(2019\)](#) on *Saving lives in the Mediterranean: the need for an urgent response*, the Parliamentary Assembly urged member States to “allow non-governmental organisations to carry out their life-saving missions in the Mediterranean” and “refrain from stigmatising the work of NGOs” in the light of the continued denial of the basic human rights of migrants.

However, in several member States, NGOs and individuals defending refugee and migrant rights are faced with increasing obstacles for their work: there are ongoing public campaigns and messages of hate-speech against them, also supported by officials. Furthermore, there are practical, violent and judicial repressions that amount to a systemic problem. Finally, national laws in several member States were amended or new laws introduced to formally criminalise supporting the rights of applicants for asylum, refugees and migrants through legal advice, information or practical help.

The Assembly should look into this development that seems to span all over Europe. Reports tend to focus on member States on the border of the European Union, such as Serbia, Hungary, Italy and Greece. But, in many other States, there are corresponding trends. For example, in Germany, laws were introduced restricting NGOs action in the field and Amnesty International issued a report on criminalisation and harassment in France.

Irrespective of the fight against human trafficking and unfounded reproaches of supporting illegal immigration, the Assembly should examine the practical and legal situation in different member States, evaluate the consequences for human rights defenders and consider the possible interrelation of the different levels of the crackdown.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

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