Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Voluntary relocation for migrants in need of humanitarian protection

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Lord Alexander DUNDEE and other members of the Assembly

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

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In a report in November 2019, the European Union Court of Auditors stated that the European Commission should consider lessons learned when setting up future "voluntary" relocation mechanisms, as recent emergency schemes have not fulfilled their objectives.

Relocation mechanisms allow asylum-seekers of all ages and categories to be protected but are particularly necessary for children. There are 40 000 migrants on Greek islands, with some refugee camps operating at 10 times their capacity. Almost 4 000 unaccompanied child migrants in Greece now live in very difficult situations. They could be protected and cared for if every member State of the Council of Europe agreed to relocate about 100 children each.

The scope for relocation within Europe is limited. The main safe and legal route is family reunification. Yet numbers are few, since the opportunity only applies to those who have family elsewhere. One recent example of voluntary relocation is the "Dubs Scheme", named after holocaust survivor and former child refugee Lord Alf Dubs, who arrived in the United Kingdom in 1939 at the age of six on the "Kindertransport". Within two years, the "Kindertransport" saved nearly 10 000 unaccompanied Jewish children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The Dubs scheme has relocated 480 unaccompanied migrant children from Greece, France and Italy to the United Kingdom. Without this expedient, many of those children would have risked their lives taking dangerous and irregular routes across Europe or remained in refugee camps lacking education and proper support.

The Parliamentary Assembly should look at ways to achieve voluntary relocation within member States, including the "Dubs Scheme", so that similar projects can be adopted nationally, reflecting good practice such as already demonstrated by the Safe Passage NGO and the Turkish Red Crescent/Red Cross.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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