

Recommendation 1974 (2011)¹

Final version

The interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its [Resolution 1821 \(2011\)](#) on the interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants.

2. The Assembly notes that, on its southern borders, Europe has to cope with a relatively large number of arrivals by sea of mixed migratory flows. The recent arrivals following the turmoil in North Africa confirm that Europe must be ready to face such arrivals on a relatively large scale. It is therefore a matter of urgency that solutions are rapidly found to the five main problems noted by the Assembly in its aforementioned resolution, concerning the existing measures to manage these maritime arrivals.

3. The Assembly welcomes the Council of Europe Secretary General's initiative to call an extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Ministers to examine possible Council of Europe action in the case of a massive arrival of asylum seekers and migrants from the southern Mediterranean. It further welcomes the support given by the Committee of Ministers to the Secretary General's proposals on the preparation of emergency action plans, as well as regarding the training of officials dealing with asylum requests.

4. While widely supporting these decisions, the Assembly reminds the Committee of Ministers of its dual responsibility: to support those member states that are in need, but also to make sure that all human rights obligations are complied with in the context of the interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants, including by guaranteeing to those intercepted access to a fair and efficient asylum procedure.

5. The Assembly therefore calls on the Committee of Ministers to:

5.1. include in the training material all necessary elements to enable trained personnel to proceed to a screening assessment of the international protection needs of intercepted persons and to ensure that staff involved in the operations of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the

External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) receive this necessary training;

5.2. define, in close co-operation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), guidelines and standard operating procedures, when interception and rescue at sea take place, determining minimum administrative procedures to guarantee that those persons with international protection needs are identified and provided with appropriate protection;

5.3. continue monitoring the situation of large-scale arrivals of irregular migrants and asylum seekers, and in particular the issues relating to interception and rescue at sea, including by holding extraordinary meetings on the situation, where appropriate, and use the good offices of the UNHCR, with its representative at the Council of Europe, where relevant.

1. Assembly debate on 21 June 2011 (22nd Sitting) (see [Doc. 12628](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, rapporteur: Mr Díaz Tejera). Text adopted by the Assembly on 21 June 2011 (22nd Sitting).