



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL**

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**COVER NOTE**

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form: General Secretariat of the Council  
to: Delegations  
Subject: **EUROPEAN COUNCIL  
16/17 APRIL 2015**

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**CONCLUSIONS**

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Delegations will find attached the conclusions of the European Council (16/17 April 2015).

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## PREAMBLE

Saddened by yet another humanitarian tragedy, as evidenced by the recent accident, we urge EU member states to intensify their efforts in order to help all refugees coming to Europe. We urge the Council of European Union and the European Parliament to swiftly introduce relevant laws. We call on European Commission to spare no effort in facilitating this by issuance of relevant acts as well as closely monitoring the situation.

The European council confirms its comprehensive strategy to tackle the migration crisis. Priority will continue to be given to regaining control of our external borders.

This document has the intent of drawing the attention of the Council to the following points, which emerged from the discussions that have taken place and are considered to be crucial steps in resolving the issues at hand.

## AGREEMENTS

1. The European Council invites the European Commission to initiate and the Council of European Union and the European Parliament to consider further proposals of reforming the European asylum system in order to eliminate preferences regarding relocation within the EU.
2. Considering the need to create a more efficient and desirable system to cope with the mass influx of immigrants into the EU and to locate them throughout the EU, the Council strongly encourages to enforce the **Temporary Protection Directive** for specific groups of displaced persons in high need of protection which would complement our current measures with a burden sharing mechanism.
3. The Council urges the member states to **increase the speed of implementing the previously agreed Relocation Plan**, and encourages member states to reach half of the refugee relocation quota by the end of 2016.
4. This Council calls for recalculation of the relocation quota, which is expected to come to effect at the beginning of 2017, based on the member states' considerations, especially by raising the weight of refugee-to-population ratio and lowering the weight of population. The Council also considers giving further financial assistance to member states for the purpose of relocation.
5. This Council endorses the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) as the umbrella organisation that coordinates a common asylum application process. This Council urges the European Commission to initiate relevant legislation to empower EASO with more operational capabilities. The Council encourages member states to provide funding, personnel and any other support to the aforementioned organisation.
6. **It is necessary to configure a system for sharing real-time information** on the flows of refugees amongst member states, in order to facilitate the resettlement of refugees.

This information will be consolidated into a database that would be made available to all EU security organisations. The Council encourages all member states to improve the efficiency of migration information sharing among domestic intelligence agencies. Such collaborative effort will enhance the Union's ability to protect its citizens through early detection and prevention of terrorist activities.

7. **It is necessary to provide extra resources to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Operation Triton and EUNAFVOR operations to bolster their short-term capacity, but with the view of eventually transiting into a upgraded and upscaled European Border and Coast Guard Agency, with its own manpower and mandate.**

Strengthen the Common Foreign and Security Policy, along with cooperation with NATO, the African Union and other third parties, pushing forward naval operations of rescue towards refugees' point of origin.

8. **It is necessary to increase financial support to the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) to develop unmanned aerial vehicle, for the purpose of surveillance in the Mediterranean Sea.**
9. **It is necessary to provide safe and legal pathways for refugees** until their applications are processed. This will not stop perilous journey entirely, however, it would allow EU to manage the crisis more efficiently by controlling the flow of the refugees and their destinations.

The Council calls upon the European Border and Coast Guard Agency to assist and rescue migrants attempting to enter the Union through the sea and to guide them to further hotspots along the European coastline, which will be established at locations including but not limited to, the shorelines of Romania, Bulgaria and the Mediterranean Sea.

10. Regarding the EU-Turkey Agreement, this Council stresses the need to: a) improve conditions in refugee camps or "hotspots" within Turkish borders; b) send additional personnel and resources in order to improve the quality of humanitarian aid and protection of refugees; c) cooperate with the United Nations and the International Committee of Red Cross and relevant NGOs.
11. Regarding Black Sea, mindful of new smuggling routes, this Council urges the EU to provide the support of financial and human resources to the coastal area of Romania and Bulgaria under the auspices of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, in order to prevent illegal entries through the Black Sea. Meanwhile the Council also welcomes the support from all relevant actors.
12. **The Council encourages the EU to increase its efforts to facilitate peace and stability in Libya and Syria.** The Council recognises that this is a key method for successfully dealing with the current crisis, however work in all other sectors must continue unabated.