

## Responding to the refugee crisis

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Budapest, Hungary on 19-21 November 2015:

### Having regard to:

- the theme resolution 'Liberal Responses to the Challenges of Demographic Change' adopted at the ALDE Party Congress meeting in Helsinki, Finland on 15 October 2010;
- the resolution 'In Defence of Schengen' adopted at the ALDE Party Council meeting in Dresden, Germany in May 2011;
- the ALDE Party's seminar on 22 March 2015 'Reclaiming Liberalism: Shaping a modern liberal approach to migration';
- the urgency resolution 'Towards a New Asylum and Migration Policy for Europe' adopted at the ALDE Party Council meeting in Oslo on 8-9 May 2015;
- the ALDE Blueprint for a new European Agenda on Migration as presented on the 23 April 2015;
- the ALDE Migration Crisis Plan as announced on the 23 September 2015;

### Expresses:

- its deep regret and sorrow at the continued tragic loss of life as desperate persons flee conflict zones in the hope of a safe future for themselves and their families;
- its regret at the lack of unity and generosity amongst European Union member states towards accepting asylum seekers;
- its regret that walls are being built on the EU's external borders as populist illusory 'solutions' to tackling immigration; regrets the rise of nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric from anti-immigration and extreme-right political parties;
- its belief that this is not a Greek, an Italian or a Hungarian problem but a European challenge that requires the European Union's 28 member states to work together as part of a Europe-wide response;
- its belief that those fleeing from danger and seeking sanctuary must be treated humanely, with dignity and compassion at every stage of their journey through Europe;

### Notes:

- Europe is facing one of the largest worldwide inflows of persons since World War II;

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- European heads of state or government decided at the special meeting of the European Council on 23 April 2015 to strengthen the EU presence at sea, to fight human traffickers, to prevent illegal migration flows and to reinforce internal solidarity and responsibility;
- the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 23 September, and the European Commission's 'European Agenda on Migration 2015' package of proposals;
- the recent refugee crisis has challenged national security and police agencies;

**Calls for:**

- a European Peace Initiative, engaging the US, Russia, China, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia to agree on a peace plan for Syria;
- EU member states to replace the Dublin system by a permanent relocation mechanism in which every country in the European Union hosts its fair share of refugees. This European approach, coordinated by an enhanced EASO (European Asylum Support Office), would promote responsibility sharing between member states whilst keeping the integrity of the asylum system;
- the establishment within this responsibility sharing mechanism of a mandatory distribution system that would broadly take into account the profession, background and individual choice of each refugee;
- increased joint efforts to combat human trafficking, for which greater cooperation with the UN should be sought;
- EU Member States to develop a new European policy that creates safe and legal entry possibilities for asylum seekers as well as proper return and re-admission mechanisms;
- EU Member States to aim at developing safe and sustainable reception capacities in the First Asylum Country and providing lasting prospects and adequate procedures for refugees and their families until return to their country of origin is possible;
- reception centres developed in EU Member States must be accessible to all, including those that are LGBT+, and provide or have access to necessary accommodation, nourishment and health care;
- staff in reception centres in EU Member States must be trained in dealing sensitively with people who have suffered from torture, sexual abuse and trafficking, as well as people from different cultural and religious backgrounds;
- the EU and Member States to deploy language experts in all reception centres in arrival countries, especially Italy, Greece and Hungary to facilitate the registration process of all incoming immigrants and asylum seekers;
- the European Union to develop common European legal and humanitarian standards for asylum proceedings; Members States and

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the EU to ensure that asylum seekers are able to file a request at European embassies around the world;

- the EU and Member States to make sure that all officers in first reception centres are adequately trained on the matters of asylum seekers and are familiar with the 1951 Refugee Convention;
- EU and its Member States to play a more active role in early conflict prevention as well as taking measures that encourage a more harmonious economic and political development in potential conflict areas;
- the effective control of external European borders and member states to expand the mandate and budget of FRONTEX so that to operate as a genuine European border management system and carry out effective search and rescue missions at sea this system should establish both professional and effective policing as well as develop a capacity to receive, assist, register and screen people who arrive by land or sea;
- the establishment of legal and safe routes into the European Union by offering possibility to apply for humanitarian visas in EU embassies or mobile application centres in first asylum countries and enabling further legal transport routes to the EU;
- intensified cooperation of national law enforcement agencies through EUROPOL and EUROJUST, including to develop the capacity to detect and disrupt plans by criminal gangs to transport migrants via illegal and dangerous routes;
- the European Commission to accelerate talks with countries of origin and transit on readmission to strengthen our returns policy. These should be on the basis of the 'more for more principle' in related areas such as development aid and EU trade;
- European Liberal parties to protect the principle of the Schengen Area.

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