

Support to Syrian Refugees

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Vienna, Austria on 5 May 2014:

Considering:

- The serious situation in Syria where an estimated 2 million people have fled the conflict and are in need of international protection;
- the efforts shown by neighbouring countries in assisting Syrian refugees and the pressure it is putting on those countries;
- that some EU Member States and local and regional authorities are under exceptional pressure in addressing this situation.

Noting that:

- The Common European Asylum System, adopted in June 2013, creating a harmonised system between EU Member States for the reception, procedure, distribution and status of asylum seekers, is only available to those who apply for asylum when physically present in an EU Member State.
- Most people in need of protection never reach the EU, but are trapped in huge refugee camps in neighbouring countries.
- Human traffickers are exploiting the situation, making a huge profit from desperate people wanting to find their way to Europe, and that the routes provided are often very dangerous.
- An estimated 1500 people died in the Mediterranean in 2011 while trying to reach Europe.

Stressing that:

- There is an urgent need for humanitarian protection, not least for the Syrian refugees.
- The EU needs to take greater responsibility in providing protection to the Syrian refugees and in assisting neighbouring countries which are not able to cope with the pressure.
- There should be legal and safe ways to enter the EU for refugees, as an alternative to irregular entry and the risks linked to human trafficking.

Calls on:

- The European Commission and EU Member States to share the responsibility, show practical solidarity and reduce the disparities between the Individual Member States in the treatment given to these refugees.
- EU Member States to admit Syrians through the visa system (Article 25 of the Visa Code under which EU Member States may exceptionally issue visas with limited territorial validity when this is considered necessary on humanitarian grounds, or Article 5 of the Schengen Borders Code referring to humanitarian grounds).
- The European Commission and EU Member States to trigger the

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2001 Temporary Protection Directive in response to an increased inflow of refugees to the EU.

- Calls on governments of EU countries to put pressure on their governments to follow good practice, such as granting asylum to Syrians (e.g. Germany) or granting permanent residency to Syrians (e.g. Sweden).
- All countries receiving asylum seekers to respect the principle of non-refoulement, in compliance with existing international law.
- EU Member States to address acute needs through resettlement above existing national quotas and through humanitarian admissions.
- All parties involved to contribute to a solution to the conflict in Syria so that no more people need to flee from the country.