

Her Excellency  
The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign  
Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the  
European Commission

His Excellency  
The Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and  
Enlargement Negotiations

His Excellency  
The Commissioner for International Cooperation and  
Development

His Excellency  
The Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis  
Management

Dear Federica Mogherini,

Dear Johannes Hahn,

Dear Neven Mimica,

Dear Christos Stylianides,

Berlin, 05.05.2015

On 12 December 2014, at their council meeting, the EU development ministers adopted conclusions on “migration in the context of [EU] development cooperation” and acknowledged in this connection the urgent need to respond to the “unprecedented challenges related to refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as to host communities and countries”.

The crisis in and around Syria was a major topic of discussion and we agreed that there must be a determined response from the EU to this challenge.

With their communication issued on 06/02/2015 regarding support for the crisis regions in the Middle East, the Commission and the European External Action Service have given a visible and effective response from the European Union to the tragedy in our immediate neighbourhood.

We very much welcome their initiative.

Now we need to breathe life into this package of support and weave the different strands of European support into a single coherent strategy.

Apart from providing the necessary funding, we must also have an eye especially on the medium- and long-term development needs in the crisis regions and in the communities that have taken in refugees. The EU must do its part to ensure that young people in particular have the prospect of a future in their home countries.

In our view, it is important that we take the following priority areas into account:

- peacebuilding, reconciliation and conflict prevention;
- support for the integration and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons;
- reconstruction and/or development of infrastructure (water, wastewater, energy, and also social infrastructure such as education and health);
- employment and training programmes with a rapid impact;
- measures for the protection of minorities (e.g. Christians, Yazidis), in order to avert new conflicts.

We therefore ask the Commission and the European External Action Service to draft, with reference to the final Strategy and within two months thereafter, an action plan with proposals on how to respond to the refugee crisis in the short, medium and long term. That action plan should identify the needs of the refugees and the host communities, and should make early proposals as to how to meet these needs. We also feel the action plan should draw on the preparatory work undertaken for the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP).

Furthermore, we are convinced that the causes and effects of the refugee movements can only be countered effectively if we take a comprehensive approach. The Commission Communication on Migration which is about to be prepared offers an opportunity to develop just such an approach. We

very much welcome that the Commission, through your offices High Representative Mogherini and that of Commissioner for Migration Avramopoulos, sent a letter to the EU Foreign Ministers on 10 March 2015 explaining how important it is for the EU to be seen to be providing coherent support for the refugees in its immediate neighbourhood, and that this will be a key topic on the planned European Agenda for Migration. The makers of EU's development policy should make an effective contribution to helping to draft this next Communication, and the EU development ministers should also discuss the topic in the Council.

Yours sincerely,