

Thank you chair

The large-scaled immigration of refugees into the EU will still dominate our agenda during the Dutch presidency. Also in this parliament opinions on this matter diverge. But different views don't dismiss us from the duty to find common solutions.

The need for a humane reception and effective protection of refugees appeals for European solidarity and unity. President Juncker stated that the refugee crisis can be an existential threat to the European project. I cannot agree more. The future and credibility of the EU demands acting in unity and in line with the European rule of law.

The Commission shows the right sense of urgency: initiatives of president Juncker to organise meetings and put pressure on unwilling states are crucial. The involvement of many Commissioners (mr. Timmermans, mr. Avromopoulos, mrs. Mogherini, mr. Hahn, mr. Stylianides) and their spirit of cooperation is effective and actually sends a message to the Member States: only common and comprehensive answers are sufficient.

We need creative and innovative actions. The procedures on reallocation and resettlement were unconventional. Does mr. Juncker see more possibilities within the framework of the Treaty to bring the Member States? The failure until now to reallocate 160.000 refugees is concerning. Which other instruments, besides infringement procedures, could be used more, for instance in financial or political terms, to enforce compliance? And what does the Commission request from the Dutch presidency in this regard?

Instead of more cooperation we face the reintroducing of internal border controls. What strategy does the Commission see to turn this tendency and is there any perspective to common external border management?

The rights of refugees should be protected within the EU as well as outside the EU. Financial support of Turkey can improve the standards for refugees in this country. But our cooperation with Turkey also strengthens the obligation to respond adequately to the current human rights violations in Turkey, to citizens as well as non-citizens. Does the Commission agree and what do we do?

Refugees from Syria and Iraq now face obstacles to leave their country, which threatens the core of the Refugee Convention. Relieving the pressure on Turkey is crucial. What does the Commission need from the Dutch presidency in promoting a swift adoption of the recent proposal on resettlement?

Finally, a comprehensive solution includes tackling the root causes of forced migration. Mrs. Mogherini is making strong efforts in bringing the Syrian war to an end. Could she tell us if she feels sufficiently supported by the Member States and what more she would need in order to be successful?

Thank you for your attention.