



Madrid Declaration on Migration Matters

In light of the conclusions of the latest meeting of the European Council, held on 28 June, regarding migration;

Mindful of the fact that migration and asylum are one of the greatest challenges Europe is currently confronting and one which requires a comprehensive and multilateral approach;

Aware of the deep humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean as a result of the significant, although overall reduced, arrival of people in dangerous and precarious conditions;

Concerned in particular about the significant increase of arrivals into Europe through the Western Mediterranean route in 2017 and 2018;

Noting that France and Spain share a common vision and consider that co-operation between both countries and with the other Member States of the European Union as well as with their Southern neighbours, is a sine qua non condition to build a migration model based on solidarity and respect for human rights;

Stressing the urgency of putting together a clear framework within the European Union enabling a response to the migration challenge based on a true European solidarity, with concrete and practical features, as the only way of addressing effectively and humanely the drama that we are witnessing in the Mediterranean Sea;

Hereby declare the following:

- They share the same strategy to address with humanity and effectiveness the arrival of refugees and migrants to Europe.
- They express their desire to pursue their co-operation in a co-ordinated manner in the follow up to the conclusions of the European Council of 28-29 June, in order to implement these conclusions in a swift and efficient manner.
- They will work to finalise as soon as possible the revision of the Asylum Package (the Dublin Regulation in particular) and the reform of Frontex, as well as to launch without delay the revision of the Return Directive on the basis of the Commission's proposals.
- They support the strengthening of Frontex and, as a result, the external protection of the European Union and the Schengen area. Providing additional human, material and legal resources, protecting the borders and facilitating the return of migrants who do not have asylum rights constitutes an indispensable response to the current situation.



- They share a common belief that, in order to provide a response to the immediate challenge of hosting people rescued at sea by vessels other than coastguard ships or ships from Southern Mediterranean countries, it is necessary to promote the development of a predictable approach to manage, after disembarkations have taken place in compliance with international law, the processing of, on the one hand, the irregular economic migrants and, on the other hand, the persons in need of protection. In this regard, both France and Spain declare their support to the European Commission's efforts to develop, together with the IOM and UNCHR, new instruments, in particular "controlled centres" and "disembarkation platforms". These centres will strengthen European solidarity with first-arrival countries without prejudice to their responsibility under the Dublin Regulation.

- They stress the importance of prioritising the hosting and processing of migrants in Europe in accordance with the principles of responsibility and solidarity. In this area, they underscore the specific case of the Aquarius, which enabled the French refugee agency in charge of refugees and asylum seekers (OFRA) to work alongside the Spanish authorities, as an example of European solidarity. In the short term, we would suggest a temporary mechanism inspired by the "ad hoc" process for voluntary co-operation between Member States used in the hosting of migrants aboard the Lifeline boat.

- They are willing to reinforce their support for, and co-operation with, the countries of origin, transit and destination, especially with Morocco. Our desire is to be able to achieve a very high degree of co-operation with African countries, including both origin and transit countries. This co-operation must include measures regarding economic development, shared security and the fight against human trafficking, in line with what is being done effectively in the Sahel region.

We consider that the resources deployed up until now, through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the European Development Fund, the Alliance for Sahel and bilateral development aid, should be expanded, in a bilateral and European framework, with a view to addressing the needs expressed by affected countries, taking into account the overall contribution of each Member State.

- They intend to call, in collaboration with the IOM and UNCHR, a regional meeting in Spain of the Ministers in charge of migration matters. This meeting will allow European countries and several Sahel and/or Western African countries to analyse the migration flows experienced by African countries and explore possible joint initiatives.