

700 killed by an intergovernmental and divided Europe

The Union of European Federalists is deeply saddened by the loss of over 700 human lives in the Mediterranean this weekend. The Europeans should not forget that those were people escaping from misery or war, looking for a better life for themselves and their families, deceived by unscrupulous smugglers who did not hesitate to put their lives at risk for their own enrichment, and attracted by the values and opportunities that Europe stands for.

In 2014 more than 3500 people died at sea while trying to reach the European coast, this year the toll already exceeds 1500. It is unacceptable that after fifteen years of cooperation in the field of migration and the numerous calls for action and statements from the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Union is still not able to provide a strong and effective answer to the humanitarian tragedy that has been taking place at our borders since the Arab Spring and the outset of the civil war in Syria and that the European Union has been unable to address the root causes of such mass movements. Division among Member States and absence of sufficient powers and resources for the European Union are at the basis of this lack of progress.

“So far, divisions among member states and the intergovernmental method have prevented the European Union from developing a system taking effective action in the field of migration and an effective European foreign and security policy to contribute to stabilising North Africa. Events like the one that occurred this weekend show that only genuine European action is likely to stop the tragedy that has already lasted for 5 years at the borders of our Union. As long as the Union will be divided and without sufficient powers and resources, thousands of human lives will continue to be lost”.

*Elmar Brok MEP
President of the Union of European Federalists*

The UEF urges the EU to find the most effective ways to stop the tragedy that is occurring at the borders of the Union and to address the underlying causes. In particular the UEF urges:

1. the Council to resolve that the Triton operations run by Frontex are immediately scaled-up and given sufficient resources and capabilities to fulfil a broad “search and rescue” mandate that can prevent other tragedies in the coming months;
2. the Commission to present (and the Council and the Parliament to approve) urgently a reform of the Common European Asylum System which can:
 - a. ensure that all persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution and who are in need of international protection have effective access to legal asylum procedures (including in their country of origin) and do not need to turn to people smugglers; and
 - b. provide solidarity among EU Member States in hosting migrants and asylum seekers through a system of quotas and reallocation reflecting a country’s GDP and population.

Beyond addressing today’s emergencies, the UEF calls on the EU to make structural progress towards:

1. a single European policy on immigration and asylum, financed through the European budget, with responsibilities and management concentrated in the European Commission;
2. an integrated management of the asylum system, external border control, migration policy and migratory flows based on increased solidarity, burden sharing and optimisation of existing European capabilities, including the establishment of a permanent European force of border guards to support countries under particular migratory pressure and the use of Euroforces to support the Frontex mission when they are unable to cope with extraordinary migratory pressure;
3. a single European Foreign, Security and Defence Policy, including a strategy to support the political and economic stabilisation of the countries of North Africa and the Middle East provided with sufficient resources and capabilities for its implementation.

The UEF stresses that such longer-term steps require progress towards further political unification to ensure democratic accountability and effective decision-making in these fields.

END

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[Resolution of the UEF Federal Committee to support the development of a humanitarian based approach on EU migration policy in line with international and EU standards on human rights](#)

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The Union of European Federalists (UEF), is a supranational political movement founded in 1946 dedicated to uniting Europe along federal lines.