

Declaration on Maltese Government's Push-back Policy of Asylum Seekers

Whereas the Maltese Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat intended to implement a push-back of asylum seekers back to Libya, after arriving in Malta on 9 July 2013;

Whereas their deportation would have taken place immediately following their arrival without a review of their asylum applications and with no consideration to their fate should they be sent to Libya;

Whereas Libya is not considered stable and poses great dangers for migrants originating from sub-Saharan Africa who are often subjected to inhumane treatment;

Whereas such an action would contravene international treaty obligations and European Union law as well as disregard a judgement by the European Court of Human Rights;¹

Whereas on Tuesday 9 July the European Court of Human Rights blocked the deportation of migrants back to Libya through an interim measure following an urgent request by NGOs;

Whereas on 5th July 2013 Prime Minister Joseph Muscat threatened to veto unrelated EU measures should his demands on asylum seekers not be met.

The undersigned Members of the European Parliament declare:

1. Strong objection to the recent actions of the Maltese government.
2. Reiterate that under no circumstances should EU member states consider implementing policies that have been ruled illegal by the European Court of Human Rights, or threaten to do so.

¹ *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*, Application no. 27765/09, Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights, 23 February 2012, available at: <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-109231> [accessed 10 July 2013]

3. Understand the Maltese situation and the need for greater EU solidarity.
4. Urge the Maltese Government to address such concerns through diplomacy and dialogue.
5. Deplore the threat of use of veto on unrelated EU measures, considers such a threat, especially prior to any negotiations, to run counter to the spirit of the European Union, to be misguided and counterproductive.
6. Recognise that nations on the periphery of the European Union require greater assistance in dealing with asylum seekers, but emphasise the need to use legal and ethical means to request that assistance.

Signatories:

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Roberta Metsola, EPP, Malta

Jean Lambert, Greens, UK

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