Migration: Joint EU Taskforce with African Union and UN helps more than 16,000 people stranded in Libya

Thanks to the strong support of the European Union and the active cooperation of the African Union, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) assisted 15,000 migrants to return voluntarily to their homes from Libya. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also evacuated over 1,300 refugees from Libya.

As EU High Representative Federica Mogherini stressed in her remarks following the meeting at political level of the European Union – African Union – United Nations Taskforce last December, “we
want to protect lives”.

And so "we engaged with the United Nations and in particular with the International Organisation for Migration, to provide an alternative to migrants stranded in the country."

The Joint Taskforce that was set up in the margins of the EU-African Union Summit in November 2017 has exactly this objective: to save and protect lives of migrants and refugees along the routes and in particular inside Libya, accelerating the assisted voluntary returns to countries of origin, and the resettlement of those in need of international protection.

Today's announcement fulfills the targets announced at the December Taskforce meeting by High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini and in the Commission’s Roadmap on Migration of 7 December and shows that combining strengths in a true sense of partnership delivers results in an accelerated manner.

Our joint work in that regard will continue in the coming weeks. On 26 February the European Union adopted an additional package worth €150 million in support of the Joint Taskforce. The new programmes aim at providing protection to migrants and refugees in Libya, as well as assist the evacuation of additional 3,800 people in need of international protection. The new measures will further assist the reintegration of migrants in their home countries and improve assistance to migrants in the Sahel region and Lake Chad Basin. This comes on top of ongoing measures under the EU-IOM Partnership which is providing returning migrants with the opportunity to restart in their home countries.

Last week a high level mission of the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations visited Tripoli to take stock of progress made and to further enhance cooperation with Libyan authorities in the joint response to migration and protection challenges.

See also

Speech by Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary session on the situation of migrants in Libya
High level mission of the AU, EU and the UN visits Tripoli to enhance co-operation on migration and protection issues in Libya
One year of EU partnership with IOM: migrants protection and reintegration in Africa

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