

**RESOLUTION
on the**

MIGRANT BOAT DISASTER IN LAMPEDUSA

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- A. whereas Lampedusa is a small 20 km² island located in the middle of the Sicilian Channel, with a population of 5 500, which has obvious limits to its capacity to receive and host the mass of immigrants and asylum seekers who regularly land on its coast, often in desperate conditions.
 - B. whereas during the night of 3d October 2013, a vessel carrying around 500 migrants, mainly from Eritrea and Somalia, caught fire and went down about 1km from the shore of Lampedusa, causing the horrible death of hundreds of illegal immigrants.
 - C. whereas, in all, more than 300 people are believed to have died in one of the worst tragedies in Europe's decades-long migrant crisis.
 - D. whereas divers already recovered over 200 bodies at sea, but more than 100 are thought to be trapped in the hold or near to the submerged wreckage.
 - E. whereas at least 20,000 people have died since 1993 while attempting to reach the shores of Italy, according to the International Organisation for Migration.
 - F. whereas, while the area around Lampedusa is under regular monitoring by the Italian coastguard and finance police vessels, it is also true that it is impossible to control each centimeter at sea, and that the authorities that night had to deal with a total of some 400 migrants – Syrians, Eritreans and Somalis – arriving on two other boats.
 - G. whereas, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 8,400 migrants and asylum-seekers have already reached Europe by sea during the first half of this year.
 - H. whereas in the past 20 years, up to 25,000 migrants have died in the Mediterranean.
 - I. whereas Pope Francis recently spoke out against the “globalization of indifference” that leads to tragedies like the deaths of so many migrants seeking a better life.
1. Notes that the special case of Lampedusa demonstrates the need to address irregular immigration and unscrupulous human trafficking at European level and requires appropriate Community funds.
 2. Recognises that the Italian authorities are making every possible effort to rescue all immigrants arriving on Italian shores, albeit the difficult conditions they often encounter at sea.
 3. Stresses that the recent visit to Lampedusa of the President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, marks an important event in the direction of the recognition of the European dimension of the problem of immigration in Europe.
 4. Welcomes the French proposal to hold a special meeting of the European Council in order to tackle the issue of a better coordinated approach to EU border control, especially in the Euro-Mediterranean area and in border countries such as Italy and Greece.
 5. Proposes to review the current mechanisms and procedures that govern European immigration laws, particularly in view of the recent upheavals in Northern Africa following the Arab spring revolutions and the Sub-Saharan area of Africa.
 6. Considers that the internal balances within the EU budget should be reassessed, particularly as less than 1% of the EU budget is currently spent on immigration reform compared to around 40% on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

7. Stresses that in order to be able to respond effectively to the continuing influx of immigrants escaping unrest and civil war in the Middle East and Africa, it will be vital for the European Union to bolster the capabilities of FRONTEX, the EU agency co-ordinating border management and surveillance.
8. Welcomes the introduction of the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur) of sharing information and co-ordination between member states, hoping that it will become fully operational in December of this year in order to better track, identify and rescue small vessels at sea.
9. Considers that the EU should try to establish stronger partnerships on the issue of migration with those countries that are the source of refugees. Common action – whether it means cracking down on human traffickers or allowing controlled migration of skilled workers to Europe – will be an essential part of the solution.
10. Calls for the granting of the Nobel Peace Prize to the island of Lampedusa and its small but courageous community of 6.300 inhabitants who, in an extraordinary outpouring of solidarity and generosity, deal with the drama of the constant influx of migrants arriving from the sea each year. Granting the award to Lampedusa would represent an important sign and provide a ray of hope to both the beleaguered inhabitants and to those who are forced to abandon their land and experience the perilous travel by sea.