

Statement by the Council of Europe Anti-Racism Commission on the current humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean

Strasbourg, 19.06.2015 – The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) wishes to express its grave concern at the current humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean region, which has already cost so many human lives.

Many thousands of children, women and men are risking their lives, and are being exploited by human traffickers, trying to escape various tragic situations in their home countries. This situation has ignited xenophobic attitudes in a number of European states and societies. Until now the great majority of these migrants are hosted in only a few countries of southern Europe.

The dignity of all persons is a fundamental value enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights. Migration has been part of the common experience of all our countries and our European values have been greatly influenced by this.

Accordingly, ECRI calls on the member states of the Council of Europe to show solidarity with these very vulnerable persons and to accommodate appropriate numbers of them in a fair manner on their territory, as a matter of urgency. This shared responsibility will not only help persons in desperate need but will also strengthen the bond between European countries.

ECRI is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors problems of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds such as “race”, national/ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religion and language (racial discrimination); it prepares reports and issues recommendations to member States.

For more information on ECRI: www.coe.int/ecri

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