

## **Closing remarks by Sen. Filippo Lombardi**

1165<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
(Vienna, 23 November 2017)

1. Let me first of all thank all speakers, who have expressed appreciation for our report and recommendations, supporting the enhancement of cooperation between the ministerial and parliamentary levels on migration issues, and stressing the importance of a “common commitment” which we all share. This wording is even more adequate than the others which have often been used – such as “burden sharing”, “shared responsibility” or “duty” – to describe how we have to face the migration crisis.
2. I agree with the Representatives who have underlined that the migration issue will stay with us for a long time. It’s definitely not over, even if the crisis is at the moment less acute than it was a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, politicians tend to react only when facing crisis. Let’s remember that “*gouverner c’est prévoir*”, and take now the necessary measures and create a framework for meeting the unavoidable next crisis under better conditions.
3. We therefore need a strategic approach: we need what we call a “high level task force on migration and refugees issues” within the OSCE. And the OSCE needs to implement and further develop – under the Italian Chairmanship – Hamburg Ministerial Decision No. 3/16.
4. On the three specific topics mentioned during the interventions of the Representatives:
  - Missing persons are a great concern. We speak here about migrants who have died, disappeared, are detained in camps or even in slavery, with particular concern for minors. We advocate the creation of a central data bank or register for these categories, possibly by developing the initiative launched by the International Committee of the Red Cross.
  - A direct and significant linkage between migration flows and terrorist activities has not so far been identified, but we are all conscious that we have to remain extremely vigilant in that regard.
  - Internally displaced persons (IDPs) have not thus far been the object of our Ad Hoc Committee’s attention, since we had to focus on cross-border and cross-Mediterranean flows, but they certainly remain an issue for consideration within the General Committees of the OSCE PA.
5. Last but not least, let me express our gratitude to the European Union:
  - not only for the good co-operation we have experienced with various members of the European Commission dealing with this issue;
  - but specifically for the considerable efforts to work towards a responsible and shared approach of the migration issue, and being able to overcome the different views of 28 Member States (including their internal political oppositions).

The resulting joint European approach, with the significant although still insufficient means engaged in this field, is so far – and despite open questions on its implementation – the best response which has been found. This includes the EU-Turkey agreement, which is not perfect but represents a model to be followed by other countries in order to stabilize the flows and keep refugees in proximity of their countries of origin, with the hope to be able to return to their homeland within a reasonable timeframe.

Thank you again for your attention.