

Joint Statement by the European Commission and the High Representative on the occasion of World Refugee Day, 20 June 2019

“In 2018, 70.8 million people were forcibly displaced across the world, fleeing conflicts, human rights violations, persecution, natural disasters and the impacts of climate change – 29.4 million are refugees or asylum seekers. Today, we reaffirm our strong and long-standing commitment to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, those who are forced to flee and therefore leave their homes behind.

Addressing forced displacement requires a global and inclusive partnership where solidarity and responsibility are shared by the entire international community and not only by a few host countries and donors.

Europe is and will remain a safe haven for those in need of international protection. Since 2015, EU Member States granted protection to more than 1.9 million people.

As the leading global aid donor, the EU allocates 80% of its humanitarian assistance to help forcibly displaced people and their host communities in over 40 countries. This goes hand in hand with development assistance as well as with our work on conflict prevention, strengthening of the rule of law and fostering early warning and prevention measures.

From Syria to South Sudan, from Myanmar to Venezuela, we work towards durable solutions toward achieving peace and stability. So far, the European Union and its Member States together have provided support amounting to almost €17 billion for Syrian displaced inside Syria but above all to Syrian refugees and their host communities in the region since the very beginning of the conflict in 2011, in particular in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Along the Central Mediterranean Route, our work to fight traffickers and smugglers, save lives, improve the dire situation of refugees and migrants, evacuate those in need and open up legal pathways continues unabated. Far too many people are at risk and should be relocated to safety urgently. Through our joint African Union – European Union – United Nations Task Force, over 3,600 people in need of international protection have been evacuated from Libya in view of further resettlement and 40,489 vulnerable persons have been assisted to return home safely.

As long as refugees lose their lives trying to reach a safe place, our work must continue. We will continue protecting the human rights of refugees inside and outside Europe and work with partner countries and international organisations to establish more safe and legal pathways for those in need of protection. Since 2015, two successful EU resettlement programmes have helped

almost 60,000 of the most vulnerable persons in need of international protection find shelter in the EU. This work must continue.”

For more information

[Factsheet – Forced displacement: refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people \(IDPs\)](#)

[Factsheet – Delivering on resettlement](#)

[Website – EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#)

[Website – The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#)

[Website – EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis](#)