

# Remarks by HR/VP Mogherini at the joint press conference with Pr

Brussels, 21 June 2017

Check against delivery!

I would like to thank Antonio [Tajani, President of the European Parliament], for the enormous support that we have felt over the last months and years to the difficult work we have done on migration. I would just say one word: the fact that finally, one year and a half ago we moved the European institutions on the right track, taking collective action. As far as the external action is concerned this is starting to bring some results. We know it is a huge challenge. We will need to continue investing financial, human, political resources in the same direction which is the direction of partnership. It is not the walls that will manage the flows; it is partnership with countries of origin and transit, making things more sustainable from a human rights perspective, from a perspective also of European citizens in managing the solidarity internally. We need the European Council tomorrow to sustain these efforts, to put resources, to invest politically in partnerships, starting with the partnership with Africa and we need all of us to take responsibility. Sometimes we demand something from the European Union without realising that the European Union is each and every of us, each and every Member State, each and every institution and this is what I think all Europeans expect from us – that we take decisions, actions, consistently and together and, as I said, we start to see some first results. It is going to be, as Antonio were saying, a long journey. We started on the right path but it is going to require the effort of all of us together to manage better in the coming months and years.

Comment est-ce que vous allez aider la Libye dans le cadre de la lutte contre cette forme d'esclavagisme qu'on peut voir désormais s'installer aussi vis-à-vis des personnes qui viennent d'Afrique sub-saharienne?

Sur la Libye, nous avons signé des programmes avec l'Organisation Internationale des Migrations et l'UNHCR pour soutenir leur travail en Libye – un travail qu'ils ont commencé à faire avec beaucoup de difficultés et de courage. Je voudrais les remercier pour le travail qu'ils ont commencé à faire dans les camps de détention pour assister les migrants qui sont présents en Libye dans des conditions extrêmement difficiles même à imaginer, pour garantir leurs droits, protéger leur vie – ce n'est pas seulement sauver des vies, c'est aussi protéger les droits des personnes, et aussi pour leur offrir une alternative, c'est-à-dire la possibilité de rentrer dans leur pays d'origine.

J'ai fait référence au fait que plus de 4 500 migrants retenus en Libye soient déjà rentrés depuis les premiers mois de 2017 dans leur pays d'origine et ce, grâce à ce travail de partenaires que l'Union européenne soutient financièrement.

Ce travail va continuer, j'ai discuté avec le Premier Ministre [du Gouvernement d'Accord National, Fayez] al-Sarraj; nous discutons également avec les municipalités en Libye de la nécessité d'avoir plus d'accès à ces camps de détention pour garantir des conditions de protection des migrants à l'intérieur des camps mais aussi la possibilité de pouvoir retourner dans leur pays d'origine de façon sûre et dans le plein respect des droits de l'homme.

Y compris des gens qui viennent d'Erythrée?

J'ai fait référence à un programme que l'Organisation Internationale des Migrations et l'UNHCR – they are doing this with their own rules meaning that they are identifying those who are entitled to the status of refugees – and for that cases we have the resettlement procedures – and those that are economic migrants who voluntarily could return to their countries. They are assisted by the IOM through our financial support to do so.

So, we are talking about voluntary returns, protection of human rights, sometimes saving lives inside the camps, providing food and water and basic living conditions. We are at the same time facilitating returns on a voluntary basis through the international organisations of the UN system that are entitled to do this, following all the human rights highest standards – I think that this is the correct way to do.

Nel sud dell'Italia ci sono dei fenomeni criminali che approfittano di questi che sono traffici di un sistema macro internazionale. Sul fronte interno si sta pensando ad un progetto di rafforzamento, di controllo perché pare anche da molte denunce che ci sono molti minorenni che vengono coinvolti in questo genere di traffico?

Solo il fatto che laddove c'è una domanda, c'è un'offerta e viceversa, e quindi abbiamo anche un problema interno da gestire, non è mia competenza diretta il lavoro interno che facciamo su questo fronte, ma certamente ci sono connessioni delle organizzazioni criminali internazionali che vanno combattute nei paesi di origine, nei paesi di transito, lungo tutta la rotta. Noi a volte vediamo soltanto l'ultimo tratto della rotta: quello del Mediterraneo. Ed è per questo che il lavoro dell'Unione europea in questi anni, due anni, si è concentrato invece moltissimo sulla Libia, sul Sahel, sui paesi del deserto del Sahara, dove cerchiamo di smantellare queste organizzazioni criminali che trafficano esseri umani, ma trafficano anche sostanze stupefacenti, armi, con reti di finanziamento che possono facilmente andare a sostenere attività che poi incidono sulla sicurezza di larga parte di questi territori. Penso alle attività terroristiche, che a volte oltretutto spesso coprono le attività criminali, è tutto connesso. Il lavoro sul fronte esterno si è rafforzato moltissimo in quest'ultimo anno. Sul fronte interno, ripeto non è mia competenza diretta, ma chiaramente ci sono delle connessioni da smantellare.

Austrian Foreign Minister Kurz proposed that the routes on the Mediterranean Sea should be closed like the one on the Balkan. Is that a feasible option? A realistic option?

We discussed this with Minister [of Foreign affairs of Austria, Sebastian] Kurz. We were together in the European Union Foreign Affairs Council on Monday.

Closing the route in the central Mediterranean is something that is neither feasible nor is it a political objective of the European Union as such.

First of all, because as Antonio [Tajani, President of the European Parliament] said, the route goes through Libya which is a country that needs to be stabilised and helped from a political, security point of view, for the Libyans first of all. So we are not talking about a country that has a clear stable government that is in control of the entire territory. It is a country still in crisis, so it is absolutely vital, first of all, to support Libya. And we see all the fragility – we also see some the potential – but this is our first objective to stabilise Libya, to help Libya for its own sake, for the sake of the Libyan people first of all and also for security reasons. Second, because the Mediterranean Sea in the Central Mediterranean route is a bit more of a sea than what we faced in the Eastern route last year. This to say that the law of the sea obliges all, being them fishermen or military ships, to save people at sea. You cannot close a sea route. You have the moral and the legal duty to save people at sea. Then you discuss – are you entitled to stay? Are you entitled to have refugee status? Are you not entitled to stay and you have to go back? But first of all, in the middle of the sea you save lives. This is a legal and a moral obligation and a political objective we all share and we all affirmed in the European Union unanimously.

I hope I was clear enough. Thank you.

Q. Les femmes sont spécialement exposées à des violences, des viols, à la vente, à l'esclavage. Est-ce que pour les femmes, pour les enfants, est-ce qu'on envisage des actions spécifiques car le commerce, le trafic prévoient aussi l'exportation des organes. De quelle manière peut-on stopper ce commerce et ces viol invisibles à nos yeux mais qui ont lieu dans le désert? Bravo pour avoir sauvé ces vies, c'est magnifique.

Merci. En effet la semaine dernière au Niger, des dizaines de milliers de personnes ont été sauvées de manière régulière, mais je le répète, chaque vie perdue est une vie perdue de trop.

Pour les femmes et les enfants, on a des programmes et des actions spécifiques.

Premièrement, pour la question du départ des femmes, surtout celles qui sont les plus exposées au commerce sexuel, en particulier à partir de certains pays, le Nigeria par exemple. Nous faisons des programmes ciblés pour informer les communautés locales dans les pays d'origine, dans certaines régions spécifiques d'origine, sur les risques que les jeunes femmes encourent si elles commencent ce voyage dans les mains des passeurs et des réseaux criminels.

Deuxièmement, nous donnons une protection spéciale pour les femmes le long de la route. Troisièmement, point qui est très important pour moi, pendant la formation du personnel des garde-côtes libyens, nous avons ajouté une formation spécifique sur les droits de l'homme et les droits des femmes en particulier; sur la façon de gérer des situations compliquées du point de vue des droits de l'homme, des droits des femmes, des enfants; comment gérer des situations soit du point de vue médical, soit du point de vue émotionnel qui sont compliquées à gérer, précisément parce que l'expérience de Lampedusa et d'autres expériences italiennes ont montré qu'il faut avoir une formation très ciblée sur cet aspect-là.

L'Union européenne forme non seulement des forces de sécurité libyennes mais aussi des forces de sécurité dans le Sahel, au Mali ou au Niger, en appuyant précisément un travail sur le respect des droits des femmes et des hommes bien sûr, également avec la contribution des ONG internationales, spécialisées sur ce sujet.