



Ministerial
Conference 

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
19-20 abril 2024

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE MED5

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 19-20.04.24

Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain, on the seventh Ministerial meeting in Las Palmas on 19-20 April 2024, reaffirm their willingness to continue to jointly defend their shared vision of migration and asylum policy and have therefore agreed on the following elements in relation to the internal and external dimensions of the European migration policy:

Pact on Migration and Asylum

- The MED5 countries acknowledge the historical agreement reached on the legislative framework that forms the Pact on Migration and Asylum and are fully committed in its implementation.
- We call for an effective and efficient implementation of the Pact. In this phase, it is essential to keep the coherence that guided the agreement on the Pact, based on the principles of shared responsibility and adequate, tangible, and effective solidarity. The implementation process must be developed in a way that allows for proper ownership and takes fully into account the needs as indicated by the frontline Member States. The result should be a robust and fair system that works in practice and is able to manage and withstand present and future challenging situations.
- The MED5 countries remain committed to the effective management of external borders in compliance with international law, EU principles and values, and the protection of fundamental rights. We stress that SAR-related disembarkations do not imply a deficiency in the management of external borders but, on the contrary, the fulfillment of international obligations and, as such, should rely on the solidarity mechanism embedded in the new Regulation on Asylum and Migration Management (AMMR). The operationalization of the legislative instruments of the Pact needs to take that into consideration as a basis.
- The States at the Union's external border share common challenges but, at the same time, present singularities, which can change over time. These diverse border realities, together with cyclical changes in migratory pressure, make it even more important to preserve the flexibilities built into the Pact with regard to the application of border procedures.
- The Commission's Common Implementation Plan, as a blueprint for the National Implementation Plans, should primarily aim at a balanced EU-wide implementation of the new procedures and obligations.
- In this perspective, the MED5 countries look forward to the Ministerial Conference on Asylum and Migration that will take place between 28 and 30 April in Gent, as well as to the EU Home Affairs Council on 13 June.



External dimension of migration

- The implementation of the legislative framework of the Pact should be combined with reinforced work of the EU and its Member States in the external dimension axed on the prevention of irregular flows and the fight against migrants' smuggling and trafficking.
- We reiterate the need of addressing the root causes of migration, with particular emphasis on helping the countries of origin and transit build their capacities of supporting host local communities, tackling humanitarian crisis at their sources, and to set up mutually beneficial legal channels for orderly and safe migration.
- We call on the European Commission to guarantee the full implementation of existing partnerships and arrangements with third countries and highlight that there is still considerable room for improvement to make our external migration cooperation more expeditious and operational, which is precisely what our partners have asked for.
- The MED5 countries call the EU to maintain its presence, duly adapted to the new circumstances, in the Sahel, to continue supporting the region's fight against smuggling, organized crime and terrorism.
- The MED5 countries call on the European Commission to proceed with new partnerships with key countries of origin and transit in Northern Africa and the Middle East who play a strategic role in the area, as their stability is of vital importance to the EU interests.
- We call on the EU to seek increased cooperation in the field of returns, including voluntary returns, this being one of the main pillars of a robust and credible migration and asylum system.

Funding

- Funding should follow a structural and effective whole-of-the-route approach, covering the needs for the successful implementation of all procedures foreseen in the Pact, from prevention at source of illegal flows to solidarity measures, including infrastructure, equipment, staffing and training.
- The programming of EU funding of the external dimension should be part of the implementation of the Pact, supported in a more consistent and sustainable framework by all Commission's services. All migratory routes to the EU should be addressed.

EU Agencies

- Support by the EU agencies, particularly EUAA, Frontex and eu-LISA, to implement the Pact and to strengthen the external dimension, is key to an effective migration and asylum policy. They should reinforce efforts to prevent irregular migration with a whole-of-route approach and improve their adaptability to the operational needs and particularities of the front-line Member States.