

Resolution on migrants on the island of Lampedusa in Italy and their expulsions to Libya

2005/2547(RSP) - 14/04/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 51 votes to 50, with no abstentions, a resolution on Lampedusa.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the PES, ALDE, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups.

The Parliament expresses its concern at the collective expulsions of migrants from the island of Lampedusa in Italy to Libya carried out by the Italian authorities between October 2004 and March 2005. It calls on the Italian authorities and on all Member States to refrain from collective expulsions of asylum seekers and "irregular migrants" to Libya as well as to other countries and to guarantee that requests for asylum are examined individually and the principle of non-refoulement adhered to.

The Italian authorities are called upon to grant the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) free access to the Lampedusa detention centre and the people held there, who might be in need of international protection.

The Parliament is concerned about the absence in Italy of a law on the right to asylum and calls on the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, to ensure that the right of asylum is respected in the European Union, to put a stop to the collective expulsions and to insist that Italy and the other Member States comply with their obligations under EU law.

MEPs call for a delegation of members of the relevant committees to be sent to the Lampedusa refugee centre and to Libya to assess the magnitude of the problem. Libya is called upon to allow access to international observers, to call a halt to the expulsion and arbitrary arrest of migrants, to ratify the Geneva Convention on Refugees and to recognise the mandate of the UNHCR. MEPs also demand that any readmission agreement with Libya be made public.

Lastly, the Parliament recalls the need for a Community immigration and asylum policy based on an opening up of legal immigration channels and on the definition of a common standard of protection of the fundamental rights of immigrants and asylum seekers throughout the European Union.