

International Asylum Seeker/Refugee Policy Issues

[Action plan focuses on development cooperation, makes no mention of refugee camps in North Africa](#)

Times of Malta, 12 November 2015

A summit between European Union and African leaders was held on 10 and 11 November in Malta in order to discuss the migrant crisis. However, the action plan adopted is very vague on migrant readmission programmes and does not mention the setting up of refugee camps in North Africa. The plan starts with a commitment to promote cheaper, safer, legally-compliant and faster transfers of remittances by migrants and promises to launch projects to enhance employment opportunities and revenue-generating activities in regions of origin and transit of migrants. Three major topics were covered by the summit and included into the action plan: the facilitation of regular channels for migration between European and African countries, the commitment to improve intelligence-gathering on smuggling of migrants and human trafficking as well as the agreement to develop cooperation arrangements on implementation of returns and reintegration of migrants into their communities.

[Slovenia to start building fence on Croatia border](#)

News24, 10 November 2015

According to Slovenian prime Minister Miro Cerar, Slovenia will start building a fence along the border with Croatia. As the European Union's attempts to control the wave of migrants in Greece were not working, the Slovenian government decided on building the fence including a wire fence. The Prime Minister said that the border will remain open, however, it will be supervised.

[France beefs up Calais security](#)

News24, 11 November 2015

Clashes between migrants and security forces at a migrant camp in Calais lead to an increase in security on 10 November. The clashes lasted two nights and around 27 police officers were injured, while the number of injured migrants is unknown. Leading up to the violent clashes no fighting has occurred, however, local government official Fabienne Buccio 'the migrants have often entered the property of community members to get objects to block trucks on the ring-road'. Buccio speculated that the rise in violence was due to the migrants' frustration at being blocked from reaching Britain. Attempts to breach the site peaked at over 1 500 per night in August and have since dropped to a few dozen as security was boosted.

[EU warns of refugee catastrophe as winter closes in](#)

News24, 11 November 2015

The EU warned of a humanitarian ‘catastrophe’ as winter closes in with thousands of people travelling through the Balkans to northern Europe in search of sanctuary or work. According to Luxembourg’s Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn ‘The European Union must do everything to avoid a catastrophe’ saying that ‘we cannot let people die from the cold in the Balkans’. More than 770 000 people have arrived in the EU by sea so far this year, overwhelming border authorities and reception facilities. To help manage the influx, EU border agency Frontex has called for 775 extra officers, but member states have so far only offered about half that amount. A so-called relocation plan is meant to share 160 000 refugees arriving in Greece and Italy, but barely more than 100 people have been moved so far. French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said that his country had committed to relocate 30 000 refugees ‘in coming weeks and months’. He also urged his EU partners to live up to their pledges and to enforce the rules in place on returning people who don't qualify for asylum back to their home countries.

[EU’s permissive refugee policy in jeopardy after Paris attacks](#)

Joanna Slater, *The Globe and Mail*, 15 November 2015

The attacks in Paris have deepened divisions on how to handle the region’s refugee crisis and raised fears of an anti-foreigner backlash since it appears that one of the attackers in Paris may have posed as a refugee to enter Europe. Right-wing parties across the continent have started to seize on any link between the Paris attacks and migrants to bolster public support. Poland’s future minister for European affairs, for instance, who will take office this week, said Poland could no longer fulfill its prior commitment to take in 9,000 asylum seekers, demanding ‘security guarantees’ before taking in any asylum seekers. German and French officials have also expressed their concerns saying ‘uncontrolled immigration and illegal entry [in Germany] can’t continue just like that’ and that France should ‘expel foreigners who preach hatred [...] as well as illegal migrants who have nothing to do here’. Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, however, calls on European officials to not ‘mix the different categories of people coming to Europe’ or to not ‘give in to these basic reactions’ saying that those who ‘perpetrated these attacks are exactly the ones whom the refugees are fleeing’.

Regional Displacement Issues

[Ethiopia appeals for help to feed thousands of refugees](#)

News24, 9 November 2015

Deputy Director of refugee affairs, Ayalew Awoke, announced that \$20m donation by the US will be used up by the end of December warning of ‘a major crisis’ unless food aid comes in. Hosting Africa’s largest refugee population and experiencing a major draught in its eastern areas, Ethiopian resources are exhausted. USAID director in Ethiopia also says that South Sudan’s conflict is exacerbating Ethiopia's food insecurity since Hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese have fled to Ethiopia and live alongside local communities.

[DR Congo: Security Council calls for total neutralization of foreign, local and armed groups in east](#)

UN News Centre, 9 November 2015

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) called for the elimination of local and foreign armed groups such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Front for Patriotic Resistance of Ituri (FRPI) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which have for decades devastated the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The UNSC has further stressed the need to resume joint operations between the UN peacekeeping force's Intervention Brigade and the national army since high levels of violence and human rights abuses, including attacks against civilians, widespread sexual and gender-based violence, systematic recruitment and use of children by armed groups, extrajudicial executions and arbitrary arrests do still persist. The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) which has nearly 20,000 uniformed personnel on the ground with a mandate to protect civilians and support the Government in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts, could resume operations right away, however, is still waiting for President Joseph Kabila to give the green light. The Council further called for the timely holding of presidential and legislative election by November 2016.

[Climate change to push over 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030](#)

Sanskriti Sinha, *IBTIMES*, 9 November 2015

In a new report the World Bank has warned that climate change could drive more than 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the poorest regions in the world, will be hit the hardest. The report states that if no immediate measures are taken, the condition will worsen due to agricultural shocks and increased incidence of diseases. 'The resulting malnutrition could lead to an increase in severe stunting in Africa of 23% [...] The result would be an estimated 48,000 additional deaths among children under the age of 15 resulting from diarrheal illness by 2030'. However, the report also suggested measures to help countries ensure development, reduce poverty and accustom themselves to climate change by constructing dikes and drainage systems and mangrove restoration to deal with flooding, by changing land-use regulations to account for sea level rise, disaster preparedness, and by introducing climate-resistant crops.

[Africa: Droughts Expose Millions to Starvation](#)

Maria Macharia, *AllAfrica*, 11 November 2015

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) more than 3,9 million people are at risk of starvation following severe drought spells across East and Southern Africa with South Sudan being hit the hardest by El Niño weather patterns. The recently released Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) warned that at least 30 000 people are living in extreme conditions and face starvation and death in South Sudan. IPC singled out 237 000 children who were estimated to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition in South Sudan while in Warrap state alone, 26 000 children are thought to be acutely malnourished. Elsewhere, across the two regions of Eastern African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), an estimated 11 million children are facing hunger, disease and water shortages. Ethiopia is another country in East Africa that is affected by severe drought just as landlocked Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe. UNICEF Executive Director, Anthony Lake, said the humanitarian crisis caused by El Niño would see the world governing body of the United Nations (UN) to meet in France later this month.

[Angola: Independence celebrations marred by crackdown on human rights](#)

Amnesty International, 11 November 2015

As dignitaries and foreign leaders gathered in the capital Luanda to mark four decades of independence, Amnesty International is drawing attention to at least 16 activists who continue to be in Angolan jails, considering them to be prisoners of conscience, whom the authorities must release immediately and unconditionally. Amnesty International points out that authorities in Angola continue to use repressive tactics including arbitrary arrests and detentions, politicization of the judiciary and other forms of harassment and intimidation to suppress freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression. According to Muleya Mwananyanda, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for Southern Africa, the 'human rights situation in Angola is in serious decline'. He calls on Angolan authorities to uphold 'legal obligations to protect human rights as enshrined in the country's constitution as well as regional and international instruments that it has signed up to.'

[UN makes plans to send peacekeepers to Burundi](#)

AFP, *The East African*, 12 November 2015

On 11 November diplomats mentioned that UN officials were making plans to send peacekeepers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to Burundi if violence continues to grow. According to one Security Council Diplomat 'one option is to get MONUSCO troops from the DRC across the border into Burundi'. The 20,000-strong MONUSCO force in the Democratic Republic of Congo is backed up by a rapid-reaction brigade made up of elite troops from South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania that could also be deployed. Another option under consideration is the deployment of an African Union force made up of troops from regional countries, which would be 'well-placed to provide a rapid and credible response if the situation in Burundi worsens'. The plans are being drawn up as the UN Security Council is about to vote on a French-drafted resolution condemning the violence and threatening sanctions against leaders who incite attacks. The draft resolution requests that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon present options to the council within 15 days on actions that could be taken to thwart the violence. Burundi has been rocked by violence since President Pierre Nkurunziza launched a controversial bid to prolong his term in office in April. At least 240 people have been killed and more than 200,000 Burundians have fled the country.

[UN Cites Improvements in Somalia, Looks Ahead to 2016](#)

Margaret Besheer & Megan Duzor, *VOA News*, 12 November 2015

According to the United Nations' top diplomat in Somalia, Nicholas Kay, Somalia is steadily transforming from a failed state to a recovering one stating that the transformation is 'well advanced'. He also said that elections in 2016 will be a test of the country's ability and hopes that they will be more inclusive than 2012's vote. Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, however, said that 'one person, one vote' elections will not be possible under the current circumstances and that the format of the elections have not yet been agreed upon. While Somalia's security situation has improved in recent years, the government is still battling al-Shabab militants, who despite being pushed into the countryside carry out frequent attacks, often targeting government officials and African Union troops. In recent months, the militants have blown up several Mogadishu hotels, detonated a bomb on the grounds of Somalia's presidential palace, and overrun several African Union peacekeepers' bases in Somalia.

[Kenyan army profiting from illicit trade that props up al-Shabaab](#)

Aislinn Laing, *The Telegraph*, 12 November 2015

Kenya's military has been accused of taking a cut of the illegal sugar and charcoal trade in Somalia that provides the bulk of funding for terror group al-Shabaab which it is meant to be fighting. A report by Journalists for Justice, a Nairobi-based civil society group, claims the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF), which receive training from the British army, earned around \$50 million (£33 million) a year from taxing the goods travelling through the port of Kismayo, close to the Kenyan border. It said the charcoal and sugar business, both ostensibly shut down because of the revenue they provide to al-Shabaab, had the "protection and cooperation of senior political and military figures'.

South Africa

[Grahamstown hotel a refuge for foreigners](#)

Shannon Ebrahim, *IOL News*, 10 November 2015

Following the total destruction of their homes and shops in xenophobic violence on October 21 and 22, hundreds of Ethiopian, Somali and Pakistani asylum seekers have been holed up at the Stone Crescent Hotel just outside Grahamstown. The hotel owner, Tariq Hayat, welcomed 500 victims into his hotel and offered them a place to stay saying that these were his brothers and that 'they had nowhere to go and needed help immediately' so he opened his doors for them. Many of the victims of the xenophobic violence in Grahamstown are asylum seekers who fled persecution in their own countries and sought safe haven in South Africa. Knowing that their stay at the hotel is not a durable solution, the municipality has suggested to move the asylum seekers from the hotel to a local sports centre. The Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner Nasir Awan, who visited the affected community last week to understand what the foreigners were going through, commended the police for assisting the shop owners and for preventing any injuries or loss of life. The Chairman of the Grahamstown Muslim Association, Naveed Anjum, said that while the shops belonging to Ethiopians, Somalis and Pakistanis have reopened in the town itself, very few have reopened in the township. According to him the financial loss to these families can be estimated to be in the range of R15 to 25 million.

[Repatriation won't stop xenophobia](#)

Chantall Presence, *IOL*, 10 November 2015

The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Migration, an ad hoc committee that is probing violence against foreigners, addressed Parliament on Tuesday on the country's migration policy. It stated that repatriation of foreign nationals to their countries of origin will not resolve any instances of violence, since many foreign nationals are already integrated in the communities. Nicoc, a member of IMC further rejected the notion that South Africans were xenophobic, rather blaming 'root causes' and 'triggers' for the incidents of violence against foreign nationals, saying that one of the root causes was the fact that foreigners were engaged in the illicit economy. Dr Clinton Swemmer, acting co-ordinator for intelligence in the National Intelligence Coordinating Committee, estimated that 90 percent of foreign nationals in the country were in fact economic migrants. According to him 'the challenges here are socio-economic in nature and we need to work out how as a country we approach economic migrants because no country in the world simply throws opens its borders to literally millions of economic migrants to enter its territory.' He admits that 'It would be premature at this time to say we are going to have a blanket approach to repatriation or we are going to have an amnesty' and hopes for Home Affairs' review of the migration policy to give some more clarity on how to deal with this.

[S. Africa to review migration policy: minister](#)

Xinhuanet, 11 November 2015

On 10 November a cabinet minister announced that the South African government will review its migration policy to tackle the influx of foreigners. The government intends to achieve this through the immediate funding of the Standing Committee on Refugee Affairs and the Refugee Appeal Board. Furthermore, it wants to restrict the movement of asylum applicants to a single magisterial district through the setting up of decentralised refugee reception at ports of entry. Minister in Presidency, Jeff Radebe, who is chairing the Inter-ministerial Committee on Migration which is tasked to investigate the root causes of xenophobic attacks in South Africa, also stressed the need to fund and capacitate the Immigration Services (IMS) to empower the inspectorate, revamp ports of entry as well as to create the necessary systems to deal with migration and control the inflow of migrants by setting a tolerance threshold or a quota system. According to Radebe the heavy influx of foreign nationals has led to migration laws not being adhered to due to border management laxity and the visa waiver to Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. The government would therefore also develop a comprehensive strategy with the SADC states for managing migration into South Africa. He also disclosed that the Department of Home Affairs is reviewing South Africa's migration policy and intends tabling a green paper in the Forum of South African Directors-General during the third quarter of the current financial year.

[South Africa Court Sentences 8 Ex-Policemen in Immigrant's Murder](#)

Sewell Chan, *The New York Times*, 11 November 2015

On 11 November at the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria the South African judge Bert Bam sentenced eight former police officers to prison for the murder of a taxi driver from Mozambique who was handcuffed to the back of a police van and dragged about a third of a mile. The eight men were convicted on murder charges in August after the judge ruled that the victim, Mido Macia, 27, had died after sustaining blunt force injuries, from both the dragging and a further assault in the holding cell. Judge Bam sentenced each of the former officers to 15 years in prison. He said he decided against the maximum penalty, 25 years, because the killing was not premeditated and because the men did not have records of misconduct. The men were dismissed from the police force in a hearing last year.