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STOP THE MASSACRE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The MEDAC, which met in Marseilles on 22nd and 23rd April 2015, expresses its condolences for the tragedy that takes place on a daily basis in the Mediterranean, it challenges our conscience and calls for every effort to be made to end this carnage, it is a situation which must be dealt with responsibly and with discernment.

In the last fifteen years, at least fifteen thousand migrants have been swallowed up by the sea in the hope of reaching European shores. The last few days have seen hundreds of deaths which now force us to act.

Over the years, Europe's fishermen have made countless heroic efforts to save migrants desperately seeking a future for themselves and their families. They have maintained their commitment to the principle that no one should be left in the sea, following the unwritten rules that distinguish the spirit of fishermen.

The insurgence of armed conflicts, inequality in access to basic necessities such as water or food, the deterioration of the environment, the stalling of democratic processes and the infringement of inalienable rights are just some of the factors that drive men, women and children to attempt the ultimate solution: crossing the Mediterranean. However harsh and repressive the laws or measures can be, the number of people willing attempt the crossing between North African and the European coasts is not going to decrease, and consequently neither will the rescue efforts by European fishermen.

The MEDAC, on behalf of European fishermen and of the other interest groups in the AC, asks the European Community as a whole to make a real commitment to finding a solution to this problem. Immigration policies cannot be put in place without considering the issue from a European Community perspective, it should not be seen just as a Mediterranean issue.

Any EC initiative to patrol the Mediterranean must be anchored to strong humanitarian values; saving lives is a fundamental duty that must always come before any other consideration. If we do not acknowledge this inevitable fact, we will only strengthen the human traffickers' ability to infiltrate the management of migrant flows, and we are all aware of the potential results. We risk turning the Mediterranean Sea into one of the largest mass graves in human history.

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