

## Declaration on strengthening rescue operations in the Mediterranean

The Speakers and Presidents of the European Union Parliaments, gathered in Rome on the occasion of the Conference of Speakers and Presidents of the Parliaments of the European Union on 20-21 April, 2015;

### WHEREAS:

the borders of Europe have entered into a highly critical phase due to tensions and conflicts, whereby the countries of Europe run the risk of severe repercussions on their security, and Europe itself is thus obliged to play an active role by focusing its closest attention both to its eastern border and to the southern border in the Mediterranean;

the primary solution must be sought by promoting and facilitating mediation between the parties so as to resolve the conflicts;

AWARE THAT, in relation to the situation in the Mediterranean:

the international organisations could begin implementing resettlement programmes in the transit countries to enable refugees to be transferred in safety;

last year, there was a considerable increase in migration flows coming from the southern shore of the Mediterranean, particularly of asylum-seekers from the Horn of Africa, Syria, Iraq and from sub-Saharan countries;

during the past year, according to reliable estimates, more than 3,300 people lost their lives in the Mediterranean in their attempt to reach Europe; in the first few months of the current year the death toll has already reached approximately **1500**;

the succession of tragedies that are causing the deaths of so many people in shipwrecks or from exposure has created an all-out humanitarian emergency;

the gradually deteriorating crisis situations in certain Mediterranean countries, particularly in Libya, may trigger a further intensification of migration flows by sea;

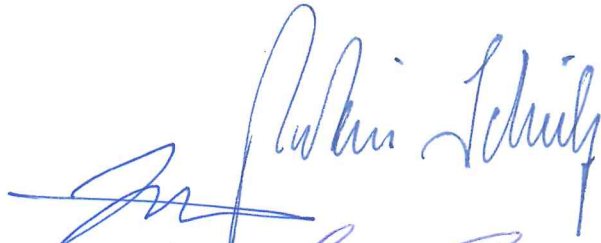
if Europe is to maintain its primacy in terms of safeguarding fundamental rights and human dignity, it is necessary to step up its commitment to saving lives at sea in terms of assets and financial resources and expansion of the field of action;

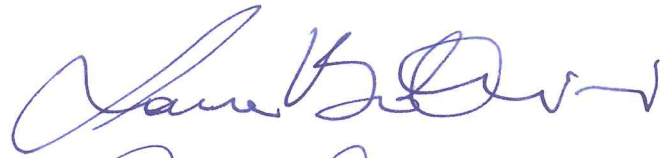
### DEEM IT NECESSARY THAT THE COUNCIL:

- a) consider whether, and what changes need to be made to the current rules for life-saving at sea **to strengthen the capacity to save human lives**;
- b) **improve the ability of the European Union and its Member States as regards search and rescue at sea according to the International Maritime Law, (see Maltese amendment to the Declaration and to the conclusions) as well as their capacity to conclude joint maritime patrol agreements with the Mediterranean coastal countries, to second officials to non EU countries and to train the**

authorities in those countries in border control, surveillance and international protection Law and tasks (see amendment from the Spanish Parliament).

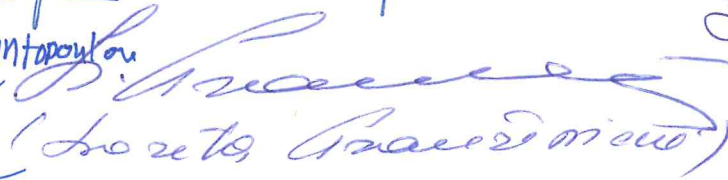
- c) while awaiting longer-term measures, to adopt as soon as possible, all the necessary measures to increase the number of ships and assets deployed in the Mediterranean to rescue migrants and asylum seekers with the joint support of all the Member States;

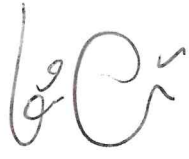






Zoe Konstantopoulou  
President of  
the Hellenic  
Parliament









Sad Malul  
Deputy Speaker of  
Grand National Assembly of  
Turkey

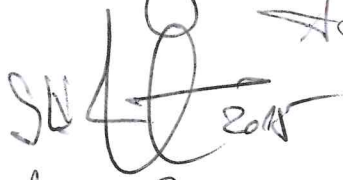
J. V. Zgones  
2015





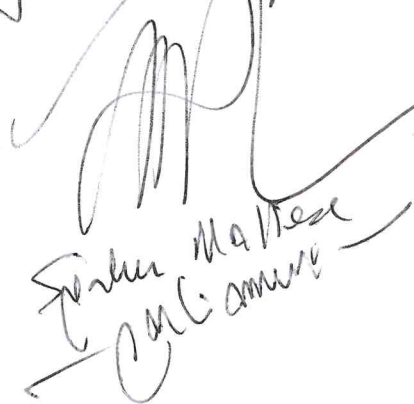
Jean Bennett

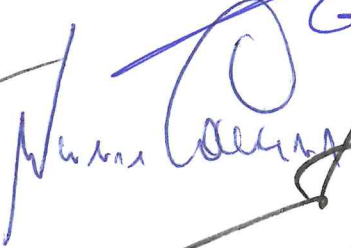
Eiki Nestor





Geoffrey Brown  
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