



International Rescue Committee

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Rescue.org

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Dr Joseph Muscat
Prime Minister of Malta
Auberge de Castille
Valletta
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Dear Prime Minister,

I hope that you are well in these busy days, especially now that you hold the Presidency of the EU Council.

I write to request your support in ensuring an urgent and significant increase in European refugee resettlement. As you will be aware, last week President Trump signed an executive order suspending the entire U.S. refugee resettlement programme for 120 days and banning indefinitely the arrival of Syrian refugees. The order also cuts the number of refugees scheduled for resettlement in the United States in the fiscal year 2017 by 60,000 from a planned total of about 110,000 to just 50,000. More than ever, a firm and ambitious European commitment is now needed to help protect the wellbeing of a significant number of the 1.19 million vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement worldwide.

The International Rescue Committee has resettled more than 370,000 people from 119 countries across the U.S. over the past four decades. We currently support around 10,000 new refugees each year on their path to permanent integration and citizenship. We know from experience that this order is harmful and hasty. However, I am convinced that President Trump's decision is also Europe's opportunity to demonstrate leadership on refugee resettlement. Now that the U.S. Administration has abdicated a huge part of its responsibility to refugees, it is time for Europe to step up. In the words of President Donald Tusk in his open letter today, "In a world full of tension and confrontation, what is needed is courage, determination and political solidarity of Europeans." I therefore hope that I can count on your support, and that of the Maltese Presidency, in ensuring that European leaders take this responsibility seriously when it comes to refugees.

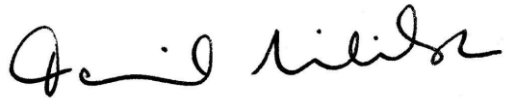
As a first step, I urge you to use the occasion of Friday's migration summit in Valetta to ensure that European leaders announce they will work together to fill the void left by President Trump's executive order and offer safe haven to 60,000 refugees this year as a first step to a more ambitious collective commitment on resettlement.

Furthermore, it is now imperative that the proposed Union Resettlement Framework is prioritised on the European political agenda. European leaders, led by the Maltese Presidency, must now fast-track this scheme, starting with a reinforced commitment to resettlement at the summit in Malta on Friday. The International Rescue Committee believes that, under this scheme, EU Member States

should aspire to resettle at least 540,000 refugees over the next five years, amounting to an average of at least 108,000 per year.

I would like to thank you for making migration and the protection of those fleeing war and persecution a priority for the Maltese Presidency – I hope that the IRC will be able to continue working closely with you on these issues. I would be very happy to speak to you on the telephone to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Miliband', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon David Miliband
President and CEO