



IFE-EFI Statement

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Euromed Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI

September 2015

Respect International Law Relating to the Status of Refugees



It is urgent to get out of the dramatic and shameful impasse of European migration and asylum policies and to provide immediate responses to human needs of those fleeing war, persecution, discrimination, poverty.

Today, thousands of women and men cross the Mediterranean and the Balkans in search of safety. Left behind by the failed asylum system in the European Union, refugees have to face violence, racism, extortion of property by criminal gangs or brutality by border

police. Fleeing war and persecution in tragic circumstances, many asylum seekers find themselves without legal status, victims of other forms of oppression, placed in overcrowded detention centres or camps where they live in degrading conditions. In addition to this, they face expulsions that keep the refugees in the infernal cycle of violence that motivated them to flee their country of origin.

Their voices are often ignored and the authorities don't take into account trauma of asylum seekers, difficulty in telling their stories, or the shame felt especially by victims of sexual violence. Women who represent a significant proportion of refugees and migrants in Europe are the most affected in this regard.

Euromed Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI calls on the European Union and the national governments to:

- Urgently search for political solutions to the conflicts that force these people to flee.
- Respect international law, in particular the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and fight against migrant smuggling networks.
- Take into account the specific gender-based persecution that exposes women to a continuum of violence from their country of origin to the immigration reception centres, via their migration routes.
- Implement concerted migration and asylum policies between EU Member States which take into account the multiple dimensions of the crises in the Middle East and North Africa from which the majority of refugees and migrants come.
- Allocate financial and logistical tools necessary to guarantee refugees decent accommodation and care.

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Euromed Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI is a policy network of women's rights organizations from the two shores of the Mediterranean advocating for gender equality and women's rights as full part of democracy and citizenship, for the right of people to self-determination, against militarism, war and occupation.

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