



9 September 2015

## **Salzburg Declaration**

### **On the European Refugee Crisis**

We are moved and concerned by the massive human tragedy unfolding before our eyes. The United Nations was established to save future generations from the scourge of war. At the moment, not only are millions of men, women, and children suffering from the scourge of war, but are struggling and often dying to find protection. Many are facing barriers of unsafe journeys, unscrupulous smugglers and traffickers, and unsympathetic governments.

The refugee crisis now confronting Europe is the most immediately critical of the many alarming problems of people displacement around the world, collectively constituting one of the biggest humanitarian disasters in the 70 year history of the UN.

How the international community resolves this crisis is a test of the seriousness of our commitment to our common humanity, and will hopefully provide a model for our collective response to acute displacement problems in other parts of the world.

To encourage a global sense of solidarity, live up to the spirit of the UN Convention on Refugees, and enable those fleeing persecution and violence to find safety, we strongly urge that a massive rescue operation be mobilized. This global rescue initiative should:

- Create humane, properly resourced and equipped reception centres in key hubs in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe where refugees are congregating;
- Ensure that these centres provide for the basic needs of those seeking protection, and assist them in the process of resettlement;
- Devise criteria for indicative quotas against which Member States throughout the world should be asked to accept refugees;
- Treat all nationals fleeing violence from Syria as eligible for temporary protection status;
- Seek support from commercial ship and airlines to provide safe and dignified transportation from reception centres to welcome centres in receiving countries;
- Create a Solidarity Fund to help finance the initiative to which all can contribute, including Member States, corporations, and private individuals, in addition to supporting existing under-funded facilities;
- Involve the urgent convening by the UN Secretary General of a Pledging Conference.

This global rescue initiative would save lives, significantly reduce the market for smugglers and traffickers, facilitate the effective processing of protection claims, and more equitably share the responsibility of a humanitarian tragedy that affects us all.

This declaration was made at the conclusion of a forum on “The Rule of Law and the Laws of War” organized by the International Peace Institute which took place between 6 and 9 September in Salzburg. Among the prominent participants who endorsed the declaration are: Turki Al Faisal, Lloyd Axworthy, Gareth Evans, Rita Hauser, Lord Levy, Amre Moussa, Hardeep Puri, Terje Roed-Larsen, Ghassan Salame, and Christian Strohal.