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Human rights must be central to EU migration compact

Press release from EFA MEP J-M Terricabras (Catalonia)

MEPs in Strasbourg have debated the European Union's proposed new 'migration compact' aimed at addressing the root causes of migration.

The European Commission proposes using EU funding to encourage private investment in migrants' countries of origin, notably Africa.

The proposals also foresee a speedier 'returns' policy with the European Commission seeking 'readmission' agreements with third countries.

But concerns have been raised about the lack of protection for refugees' human rights in the EU plans.

Josep-Maria Terricabras, President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, spoke in the debate with European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans and EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini.



J-M Terricabras MEP

Terricabras warned that the EU risked repeating past mistakes without strong human rights safeguards.

Speaking in the debate, **Josep-Maria Terricabras** said:

"I fully agree that our response to the present humanitarian crisis in Europe should be comprehensive."

"I agree that Africa should receive our increasing political consideration. Nevertheless, the first ideas proposed on the migration compact do not mention two extremely important points: firstly, there is no mention of the defence of human rights.

"We seem only interested in getting rid of present and future refugees. Of course, we are ready to pay to get rid of them.

"The second point is closely related to the first. Apparently, we totally trust all African leaders – morally and economically.

"My question is: are we going, for instance, to trust the countries which were mentioned here as we have trusted Turkey?

"Without defence of human rights, without a strong democratic control on our own procedures and on our agreements with third countries, we are about to repeat all the mistakes made in the recent past."

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Josep Maria Terricabras

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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