



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
New York

Statement by Federal Foreign Minister

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**Strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee
movements in the perspective of the new
development agenda
- a human rights perspective.**

New York, 30 September 2015

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Out there in the harbor of New York City, inside the Statue of Liberty, there is a poem that says: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”. These days, I feel like the Statue of Liberty would fit in many cities around the world –Amman or Gaziantep, Munich or Agadez– to welcome the huddled masses of today. More than 60 million people today have fled their homes – more than ever before since the founding of the United Nations!

The reasons for their flight are diverse - civil war, the threat of terrorism, political persecution, exclusion or discrimination – but these countless stories have one thing in common: The violation of human rights drives people from their homes.

To me, that has two implications:

First, we need to understand the close link between human rights, peace and security.

In the long-term, we cannot have one without the other. So we have to tackle the root of the problem! We have to learn to read patterns of persistent human rights violations as early warning signs and address them early on with the entire toolbox of diplomacy and of the United Nations. It will save people’s lives, it will save them from fleeing and it will prevent new conflicts.

But, secondly, to the millions of refugees today, all of us in the International Community share a common responsibility.

And in order to live up to it, we need to do much more than we are currently doing:

First, The UN's humanitarian agencies provide the most urgently needed assistance but they are dangerously underfunded. Germany has pledged an additional 100 million Euros- and we call upon others to follow. That is why, as G 7 chair, I convened a donor meeting yesterday and I am glad about the support.

Second, we need to address the humanitarian situation in the conflict areas. During armed conflict, every party to the conflict has to adhere to international humanitarian law, including the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need.

I suggest that we work together on the basis that is already there.

Concerning Syria, the Security Council passed Resolution 2139 last year clearly condemning the use of barrel bombs and demanding humanitarian access to the suffering people. Let's take that resolution as common ground and carry it forward.

Our third task is to protect the human rights of people along their path of migration. This includes the fight against trafficking and smuggling, while making sure that people are not sent back into harm's way.

This is an enormous task especially for the neighboring countries of Syria –Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, who need our support. But –and

I say that with just as much concern- treating refugees with dignity and protecting their rights is also the defining challenge for us in Europe. Even though European search and rescue operations save thousands of lives on the Mediterranean, we must not forget the thousands who have lost their lives on that dangerous journey. We need a common European asylum system with common humanitarian standards in all of Europe, but that's still a long way to go.

Dear colleagues, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development proves that these United Nations can come together to meet global challenges head-on. We owe the same to the millions of refugees. We must rekindle the Statue of Liberty's flame of hope that shines out to the "huddled masses" of today. *Thank you.*