Refugees and Migrants: possibly humane solutions

The refugee theme has undermined European solidarity, even though only 0.1% of the 68 million refugees in the world are trying to get to Europe. Europe struggles to find solutions but the proposals so far on the table are insufficient, often inhumane. Externalization of borders, walls, barbed wire, restrictive laws, detention centers that violate the dignity and fundamental freedoms of the person, stripping people of their non-negotiable rights in the name of security. all of this has over the past 25 years fostered illegal conduct and trafficking in humans and organs.

European governments must remember that the right of the weak is not a weak right! So we need to find solutions that do not violate the rights of migrants and refugees.

Our proposal is:

1. Prevention: defending the right not to be forced to migrate by war, dictatorship, persecution, climate change etc. ... therefore prevention of conflicts and violations of the fundamental rights of citizens and democratization in the countries of origin.

2. Protection: it is necessary to identify the transit countries that welcome refugees without penning them in camps in depressed areas, and that grant freedom of movement and inclusion in the society - as is for instance the case in Uganda and Ethiopia which offer the right to education and work to refugees from neighboring countries – and then to provide the resources to ensure decent living conditions in these contexts, to create jobs, improve infrastructure and strengthen the democratic institutions of these countries.

3. Hospitality / Integration: legal access is needed for asylum seekers and worker migrants; using tools already provided for by law today, issuing humanitarian visas, setting up refugee resettlement programs, facilitating family reunification with a broader definition, establishing the sponsorship procedures as is already happening in Canada, offering scholarships, creating humanitarian corridors as necessary. For workers, opening entry and visas for work or job-seeking, and in this giving priority to the poorest countries on the planet.

These proposals would be helpful for the safety of those fleeing from persecution and war scenarios, but also for those welcoming refugees; for if they arrive with regular visas, we avoid enriching criminals and traffickers.

We need the member states of the European Union to make every effort to find more humane solutions which are more respectful of human dignity.

Father Mussie Zerai, Habeshia Agency

Contact: agenzia_habeshia@yahoo.it