



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

15-03358

21 April 2015

Excellency,

On the eve of the European Council meeting which you are convening on the crisis in the Mediterranean, I wish to join Member States of the European Union in also expressing my sadness and concern at the tragic loss of lives at sea in recent days and in the preceding months.

I have followed closely the deliberations and actions undertaken by the European Union in response to this crisis, which has claimed, in unprecedented numbers, the lives of migrants and refugees fleeing war, persecution and distress. I have commended the efforts of Italy in responding to the crisis.

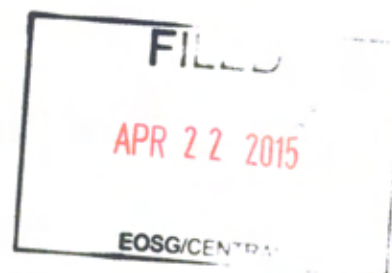
I have noted the adoption by European Union Foreign Ministers and Interior Ministers on 20 April 2015 of a ten-point plan of immediate actions to be taken in response to the crisis. I urge the European Union to continue to take comprehensive and bold collective action to put an end to these human disasters at sea.

The safety, protection needs and human rights of migrants and refugees must be at the centre of the response. In my statements on the issue, I have reiterated the importance of ensuring the right to asylum, and called on the international community for solidarity and responsibility-sharing, both with countries hosting large numbers of refugees and within the European Union.

I would encourage the European Union to consider the proposals presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres. He calls for a strengthening of the search and rescue operation of the European Union, providing swift access to asylum procedures to those in need of international protection, increasing legal and regular channels of migration, and working with the wider international community to address the root causes that drive so many people to undertake this perilous journey.

Time is not on our side. In the absence of political solutions to crises in the Middle East and Africa and of adequate regular and legal channels of migration, the ruthless smuggling of persons will continue unabated along the southern borders of Europe. We all have a moral imperative to act swiftly.

His Excellency
Mr. Donald Tusk
President of the European Council
Brussels



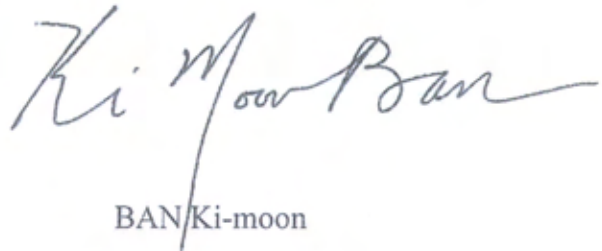
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At this critical hour, I count on the resolute and collective response by the European Union, its Member States, and the international community at large. The United Nations stands ready to work closely with the European Union and its Member States, together with the countries of origin and transit, to alleviate the immediate plight of migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean, and to find long-term and durable solutions.

I would be grateful if you could share this letter with participants attending this important extraordinary meeting of the European Council. I wish you success in your deliberations and outcome and thank you for your continued and concerted efforts to deal with this crisis.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


BAN/Ki-moon



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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

REFERENCE:

21 April 2015

Excellency,

The Secretary-General would be grateful if you could kindly forward the enclosed letter to His Excellency Mr. Donald Tusk, President of the European Council.

A copy of the letter is attached for your information.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jan Eliasson'.

Jan Eliasson
Deputy Secretary-General

His Excellency
Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting
Head of the Delegation of the European Union
to the United Nations
New York

**Note to the Secretary-General
(through the Deputy Secretary-General)**

Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the European Council on the
Mediterranean crisis

1. Please find attached for your clearance and approval, a letter to the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, on the occasion of the extraordinary meeting of the Council on the Mediterranean crisis, taking place on 22 April 2015.
2. The letter was drafted by the Political Unit and the Development Unit, in consultation with UNHCR.


Paul Akiwumi
21 April 2015

Received in ODSG

21 April 2015

Seen by: P.V.

21 April 2015