

**RESOLUTION OF THE COALITION COMMITTEE**  
**[of the CDU-SPD-government of the Federal State of Germany]**  
**6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2015**

*[no official translation, remarks in brackets [] have been added]*

In these weeks and months, Germany is the the country of destination for an unprecedented number of refugees who seek safety in our country from war, persecution and hardship. Hundreds of thousands of people in Germany encounter these refugees with an unprecedented helpfulness and solidarity. This big wave of helpfulness and humanity, but also the economic strength of our country are the reason why we can meet this challenge. For this, we are grateful to the people of our country.

But it is also clear that we can only meet this challenge if we have success in the international fight against the causes of flight (civil wars, destabilization of entire states and terrorist threats) and if we can provide help for the neighboring countries of crisis areas. Above all, we also need intra-European solidarity and a common asylum and refugee policy of the European Union. This is equally on the agenda as the creation of a sustainable infrastructure for refugees and their integration into our country.

Therefore, the coalition committee has looked into the current refugee and asylum situation and has agreed upon a common position regarding further proceedings and regarding the forthcoming discussions and decisions at EU level and at the level of the federal states:

**I. Fighting causes of flight and stabilize the neighbouring countries**

- We will examine if, similar as currently in Niger, further reception centers and facilities can be established in North Africa.
- We want to increase the EU's commitment to combat the causes of flight in the major countries of origin by European funds.
- Germany will assume its international responsibility and expand its commitment to crisis-handling and crisis-prevention. For this, the funds in the budget of the Department of Foreign Affairs [Auswärtiges Amt] will be increased by 400 million Euros every year. This will serve to support the supply and care in refugee camps in crisis areas and it will serve to stabilize the countries of origin and countries of transit by stabilizing statehood and by establishing institutional structures as well as increasing our commitment in the fields of conflict resolution and mediation. Also, communication work in the area of migration policies shall be intensified.
- The visa sections in Germany's diplomatic representations abroad shall be expanded.
- The funds of the the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development [Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung] will be concentrated on the combat against the causes of flight in the most important countries of origin.

## **II. Europe**

Considering the development in the Middle East as well as in many African countries and the accordingly strong increase of asylum seekers and refugees, Europe and Germany are facing a major challenge that can be managed by the European Union only by acting together and on the basis of its values system and legal order. Germany stands by its humanitarian and European commitments and expects the same from its partners. This includes compliance with the Dublin III Regulation and willingness to a pan-European solidarity regarding the reception/admission of refugees. The decisions that have been taken by Germany and Austria during the weekend [of September 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 regarding the temporary opening of the borders of Germany/Austria to Hungary] shall remain an exception.

Therefore, at the upcoming meetings at the European level, first at the special meeting of European interior and justice ministers on September 14<sup>th</sup>, the following topics shall be the central points:

- Creation of decent reception centers and registration facilities (so-called Hotspots) in those EU Member States with external borders where the influx of refugees is especially high. These centers shall be established and managed by the EU – the UNHCR shall participate – together with these member states [with the EU-external borders], in order to ensure that there will be proper examination and decisions in the asylum proceedings before the repatriation [=deportation/'voluntary return'] or the further journey to other EU member states.
- A distribution and reception of refugees in need of protection that shows solidarity and fairness by the EU member states.
- A common EU list of safe countries of origin.
- A fundamental reform of the EU asylum policy with the aim of a unified, common EU asylum law.
- An effective fight against illegal smuggling of human beings.
- An effective practical and financial support of the currently most stressed EU countries.
- A strengthening of the EU commitment to combat the causes of flight in the main countries of origin.

## **III Federal level [Bundesrepublik Deutschland], federal states [Bundesländer] and municipalities [Kommunen]**

Federal, state and local authorities are in a community of responsibility and have to create within a short amount of time through a large national community action the conditions to receive an unprecedented number of vulnerable people as well as the conditions to repatriate [=deport] the ones who are enforceably obliged to leave the country. Given the current forecasts, the financial, staff, organisational and legal/regulatory measures that have already been taken and the financial, staff, organisational and legal/regulatory measures that are already being prepared will not be

enough. Therefore, we [the federal government] will, together with the federal states, work quickly on an overall package of political measures, that shall be enacted already in October by both the German Federal Government [Bundestag] and the Federal Assembly [Bundesrat].

## **1. Speed up asylum procedures including repatriations**

- The priority will continue to lie on speeding up asylum procedures and on reducing the amount of cases that are still to be decided by the BAMF [=Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge]; this shall, among other things, be done by quickly hiring personell to fill the already created additional jobs [in the BAMF] and by non-bureaucratically win more staff to create additional capacities to make decisions [on the pending cases].
- The German Minister of the Interior will, together with the federal states, establish a high level task force to speed up the procedures and to speed up the winning of new staff members for the BAMF.
- At the Federal Police, 3000 additional jobs will be created for the coming 3 years.
- By changing the law, the countries Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro will be determined as safe countries of origin [sichere Herkunftsstaaten].
- The maximum length of stay at the initial reception centers [Erstaufnahmeeinrichtungen] will now be up to 6 months [at the moment, it is officially up to 3 months] – accordingly, the duration of residential obligation [Residenzpflicht] will also be extended [to up to 6 months]. The distribution to the local authorities will take place right after applying for asylum in these cases.
- For asylum seekers from safe countries of origin [these are in German law at the moment: Ghana, Senegal, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and all member states of the EU; according to the German government's plan to change the law, soon also Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro] the duration of stay in the initial recpetion centers will be extended until the end of their asylum procedure and their usually following repatriation.
- Persons who again enter the country [after already having been rejected] to apply again for asylum, will be placed in initial reception centers.

## **2. Creating decent initial reception centers and refugee accommodation**

- The federal government will increasingly support the federal states and local authorities in creating winterproof accommodation for about 150.000 people in decent initial reception centers [Erstaufnahmeeinrichtungen]. For the accommodatin of refugees, the federal government will provide the federal states and the local authorities on demand with all available real estate that is owned by the state – immediatly and rent-free, and the state will also pay for the preparation of these buildings.
- If there is no real estate owned by state available, the state will provide proper financial support to create the needed accomodation space.

- In an acceleration law, the deviation from current regulations or standards shall be made possible for a limited amount of time in order to be able to cope with the current asylum and refugee situation. The federal states shall be encouraged to create according regulations themselves.

### **3. Eliminate false incentives**

- The need for cash shall be reduced/replaced as much as possible through providing non-cash benefits in initial reception centers [Erstaufnahmeeinrichtungen].
- Asylum seekers from safe countries of origin shall stay in the initial reception centers until the end of their asylum procedure.
- The payment of cash benefits shall be provided to a maximum 1 month in advance.
- The maximum duration of the suspension of deportation [=Duldung] shall be reduced from 6 months to 3 months.
- Social benefits shall be reduced for persons that are enforcably obliged to leave the country (without a suspension of deportation) [=people without a Duldung].

### **4. Relief/support for federal states and municipalities**

The federal government will increase the funds in the budget for 2016 with another 3 billion Euros and provide additional 3 billion Euros to the federal states and municipalities in order to cope with the refugee and asylum situation. About the particulars of how to use these funds, there will be an agreement with the federal states until the 24<sup>th</sup> of September.

### **5. Improve integration**

People who are entitled to protection and to a durable stay in Germany shall be able to quickly find work and to earn their livelihood themselves. The key requirement for integration into society and working environment are German language skills. The federal government will, as was already agreed upon with the federal states, open the integration courses for asylum seekers and persons with a suspension of deportation [Duldung] and accordingly provide more funds for the increased demand. Also, funding of job-related language skill promotion will be secured according to the demand by providing federal funds.

- The ban on temporary employment/labor leasing [Leiharbeit] for asylum seekers and persons with a suspension of deportation [Duldung] will not be applicable after 3 months.
- To provide early and precise support for an early integration of refugees into the labor market, we will increase funds for measures in the field of labor market policies as well as for job-related promotion of German language skills and for hiring new qualified personell

in the job centers according to the increasing demand.

## **6. Create alternatives to the asylum way**

For nationals of the countries of the Western Balkans (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro), we want to create legal possibilities of migration from their country of origin to start working in Germany. Persons with an employment contract or articles for an apprenticeship fulfilling wage agreement conditions shall be allowed to work or start an apprenticeship.

## **7. Expand/Develop Social Housing**

The current influx of refugees and asylum seekers is increasing the need for affordable housing, especially regarding already tense housing markets. The federal government will support the federal states and local authorities in constructing new flats and in expanding the stock of social housing.

- The federal government will quickly provide the municipalities and municipal companies with conversion real estate [= real estate that is currently not used for housing, but is owned by the state] as well as with other real estate at a reduced price for social housing.
- The federal government and the federal states will examine how the construction of affordable housing might be promoted by tax incentives in areas with a tense housing market.

## **8. Support and coordination of voluntary work**

A lot of people in Germany are volunteering in the reception of people in need. The voluntary activities of citizens is of inestimable value. We will support this work and create up to 10.000 additional posts at the Federal Volunteer Service [Bundesfreiwilligendienst].