



AS/Mig/Inf (2022) 02 REV

21 March 2022
aminf01rev_2022
Original: English

Urgent need for evacuation of persons fleeing Russian aggression against Ukraine from neighbouring countries by resettlement and relocation

Declaration

The Committee declares the following:

We are deeply concerned about the devastating consequences the Russian aggression against Ukraine has on its civilians. The bombing of cities, civilian infrastructure and other violations of international humanitarian law have forced many persons to flee, seeking safety and shelter in neighbouring countries.

According to UNHCR, over 3.5 million persons fled from Ukraine in less than four weeks – the biggest refugee exodus seen in Europe since World War II. Estimates anticipate that this number could rise to 10 million over the coming weeks, exacerbating the humanitarian catastrophe as the conflict continues to unfold.

In its Opinion 300 (2022) adopted on 15 March 2022, the Parliamentary Assembly expressed its deep concern about the situation of Ukrainians who have been forced to flee in fear for their lives. The Assembly applauded the solidarity shown by neighbouring countries that host millions of refugees, most of them women and children, it welcomed the decision by the EU to implement directive 2001/55/EC while calling for further support, including through resettlement programmes. Indeed, neighbouring countries cannot shoulder the challenge of the historically immense number of arrivals by themselves. In addition, the persons concerned need further protection, being highly vulnerable and in danger of human trafficking, smuggling, abuse and exploitation. Therefore, there is an urgent need for States within the EU and the Council of Europe to coordinate in a common spirit of solidarity evacuation programmes for these persons from Ukraine's neighbouring countries.

Recalling Resolution 2409 (2021) on *voluntary relocation of migrants in need of humanitarian protection and voluntary resettlement of refugees*, we urge member States to engage in a coordinated humanitarian response and to evacuate persons who fled the armed conflict in Ukraine from neighbouring countries by resettlement and relocation, without discrimination on any basis, in particular ethnicity and national origin.