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**EIN & Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies joint 'Food For Thought' Seminar on
*HOW TO TACKLE THE ROOT CAUSES OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION:
STRENGTHENING EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY***

Chair:

- **Davor Ivo STIER** MEP, EPP Group Coordinator of the Development Committee in the European Parliament

Speakers:

- **Felix FERNÁNDEZ-SHAW**, Member of the Cabinet of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica MOGHERINI, in charge of Africa & ACP, ENP Review, Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- **Geert LAPORTE**, Deputy Director of the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
- **Priscillia ANDRIEU**, Special Advisor to the President - Energies for Africa Foundation

Moderator:

- **Roland FREUDENSTEIN**, Policy Director, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies
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- > Irregular migration challenge does not begin with the arrival of flows of migrants; rather it begins when they become so desperate that they prefer risking their life for betterment elsewhere.
 - > The importance of identifying the root causes of irregular migration as a measure to solve the overall problem: Hence, attention to poverty, bad governance, lack of sufficient living conditions, development, peace, security and justice needs to be paid. In this regard policies for development, the reform of economic sectors, climate change and the environment have to evolve. Attention needs to be paid to industrialisation and security of investment.
 - > Nonetheless, we still do not know all the causes and reasons why people migrate, and we sometimes assume wrongly. e.g., assumption that increasing development will reduce the number of migrants has been proved to be wrong (i.e., one needs means to travel).
 - > Therefore, we need to find comprehensive solutions to create real opportunities in the countries of origin, especially for young people.
 - > There are no immediate solutions to tackle the problem of irregular migration. Development of long-term policies is vital. Pressures we can exercise in favour of return or readmission policies are no longer effective.
 - > As a matter of utmost importance we stressed the need for Europe to adjust to the new prevailing conditions. African countries do not depend solely on aid from the EU. Therefore we can no longer buy reforms or put pressure on African countries to reach our objectives. Similarly, we have to adopt new policies in relation to the African countries which are no longer in the category of least developed states.
 - > In a similar manner, it is important to keep in mind that migration is about people's choice: it is not acceptable to enforce choices on people.
 - > It was likewise asserted that attempts to solve the current migration crisis should be distinguished from the issue of migration in general. While we do not want uncontrolled flow of migrants, Europe needs a skilled and professional work force.
 - > An important tool to solve the problem of irregular migration was stressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
 - > The need for enhanced scrutiny from the side of the European Parliament was also stressed. This was specifically directed in its coordination with the European Commission, which often refuses to disclose specific information or projects in their preparatory phase.
 - > Current changes in Africa also need to be regarded seriously. With the current demographic explosion in Africa the overall population will soon reach 2 billion. Therefore Europe should pursue opportunities for cooperation and closer economic relations. The creation of jobs for young people and the adequate supply of electricity to this growing population (80% of Africans do not have access to electricity which accordingly affects their education and job opportunities) are critical.
 - > Currently Europe does things *for* Africa. It is time to start do things *in conjunction with* Africa: it is a renewed relationship based on cooperation that we strive for.

The 'EIN-A4' represents a summary of the joint 'Food for Thought' initiatives. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the EPP Group political line.