



## **Statement by First Vice-President Frans Timmermans on deaths in the Mediterranean**

Brussels, 12 February 2015

On behalf of the Commission, I want to express our profound regret about the lives that were lost at sea on Tuesday and the news yesterday that an even larger number of lives may have been lost in the same incident. This is another tragedy on our doorstep and we cannot turn a blind eye.

As long as there are wars and hardship in our near and far neighbourhoods, people will continue to flee and search for a safe haven. Europe is seen as that safe haven by many people. Their lives and safety are our joint responsibility: the EU, the Member States, the EU Agencies, and also countries of origin and transit.

I'm calling on all Member States to work with the Commission to find comprehensive solutions to better manage migration. We are all in this together.

The Commission is preparing a European Agenda on Migration, as one of our top priorities. But we cannot do it alone. Together with Member States and countries of origin and transit, we need to address the reasons why people feel they need to flee even knowing they risk to die.

If we want to seriously improve the management of migration, what we need in the EU is more cooperation at all levels, more solidarity and more sharing of responsibility. Our approach must be both comprehensive and much more effective.

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