



Refugees Digest 17 **June 2017**

Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons

Over the first few days of May 2017, 250 migrants and refugees died in the Mediterranean in attempts to reach Europe. This brings the number of deaths to approximately 1700 for 2017. It is estimated that 43,000 people attempted to use the central Mediterranean Sea route in an attempt to make their way to Europe. A recent survey shows that already in the first six months of 2017, Italy has received 19% more migrants than for the same period in 2016. The first and second links take us to this discussion including an analysis of the root causes of the phenomenon of human mobility. The third link raises issues around the safety of women refugees in some shelters. The ninth link asserts that the existence of refugee camps marks a failure by the international community to honour and implement a culture of human rights.

Under President Donald Trump's administration, the issue of migration continues to be robustly contested. The link to CFR immigration debate gives a very comprehensive overview of the situation in the USA from several points of view and is excellent back ground material. For instance studies show that there has been a drop in entry to the USA by undocumented migrants. It also points to the fact that probably 11m people fall into this category, half of whom have lived in the USA for ten years or more and two thirds have children born in the USA. It also points out that 4m people are in the system having applied for immigration visas. Of interest, especially given SA's resistance to allowing for family re-unification, two thirds of the 1m legal immigrants to the USA were granted on this bases. The sixth link points to the efforts which the Church is making to protect migrants and especially migrants who seek refuge on church property in compliance with the old church tradition of 'offering sanctuary.' The seventh link goes to the important contribution of the Holy See to the protests against detention of children and especially of migrant children. The eighth link points to the Pope's reflection to the Assembly of Latin American and Caribbean Parliaments on 7th June where he asked the legislators to view migrants not as numbers but as 'people with faces.' He asked them to reflect on the realities which cause migration, on dialogue as a methodology for opening new paradigms and for commitment on the part of legislators and others with political leverage to make a change in the environments that impact on displaced persons. At the UN Archbishop Auza made the point that war is one of the biggest drivers of migration. The ninth link leads us to that intervention. The last link takes us to an interesting article published by the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development based in Rome which makes the point that remittances sent by migrants to home countries has doubled [51%] in the period 2007-2016. In the same period migration rose by 28%.

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