

CONCLUSIONS

of the international conference: “European values and security faced with the migration and refugee crises – A perspective from the civil society.” (Skopje, 20 September 2016)

- Facing migrant and refugee crisis as a problem and a challenge to almost all European countries, the Central European Initiative (CEI), during the Macedonian presidency in 2015, encouraged and supported several activities aimed at clarifying and dealing with this history-known phenomenon.
- The European Movement in the Republic of Macedonia (EMRM) as part of the European Movement International (EMI) actively participates and contributes to the debate and building of relevant international, regional, and national mechanisms for managing this crisis. For this purpose, EMRM, in cooperation with the Institute for Geostrategic Research and Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IGRFP MFA) and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) in Skopje, supported and co-funded by CEI - Cooperation Fund, decided to organize an international conference on this current European and global challenge.
- The conference was attended by representatives of national councils of the European Movement and civil society organizations from the CEI countries, as well as Turkey and Germany. Many representatives of the competent authorities and relevant international organizations in the country, experts from academia and others also attended the conference.

The conference highlighted that:

- The European Movement International, as the cradle of European unity and modern European institutions, expressing the position that is widely known in European civil society circles, points out that "European migration policy should be built based on a shared agenda, not a unilateral action contrary to European values."
- The European response to the crisis inevitably needs to be compliant with the essential values, which the home of European unity is built on: democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, humanity, and solidarity.
- High European values and social and economic standards have highly (appealing) effect on the people whose lives and everyday existence are threatened and are forced, while passing the difficult road of sufferers, to seek refuge, expecting as asylum seekers to be treated as human beings, with respect and dignity.
- Mass migration and refugee waves cause economic, social, financial and political implications for the present dilemmas and differences for which an adequate and single response has not yet been invented, thus raising a series of questions such as the registration of migrants and refugees; prevention of illegal migration; the method of protection of European borders; and so on.

- Citizens are concerned to see the enormous increase in the "business" of organized and interconnected criminal groups involved in migrant trafficking, transfer across borders and transportation of people illegally, incidents with and among migrant groups, as well as the risks of radical infiltration and terrorism.
- Shared responsibility is to continuously build awareness and attitude of non-discrimination, anti-xenophobia, tolerance, and solidarity for people without a homeland, in accordance with the Convention on the Status of Refugees, the European Convention on Human Rights, and other international treaties for their protection. In this context, it is necessary to offer special support measures for particularly vulnerable groups such as orphans.
- Civil society organizations and local authorities have a key role in social-economic integration of asylum seekers and so should additionally be supported financially. It is not one-way but a two way process; thus, for those arriving further efforts are required for adaptation (with the necessary support) in terms of local culture, language, traditions and daily life of citizens.
- The events that took place and those that are anticipated, have shown in evident manner that the Western Balkans is one of the key links in the European security system. State authorities and citizens of the regional countries have shown willingness and capacity for humanity and solidarity, at the level of real Europeans, towards migrants and refugees. Such a role in resolving the crisis situation and in finding a sustainable political and security situation, confirms the need for full integration of the region into the EU and NATO, for those countries that so desire.
- Collapsed walls were a great step towards the future of Europe. Barriers and entry taxes in the name of security, which from temporary would become long-term measures, threaten freedom of movement of citizens, revise the rights and freedoms that are essential to the European project and lead to new lines of division on our continent.
- Lack of a single integrated system of defense and border protection led to the installation of barriers causing a domino effect and so it is not sufficient defense against illegal entry, which even intensifies. It is necessary to improve and promote cross-border cooperation and coordinated approach to the shared problem to give a shared response in all segments of the management of migrant and refugee waves.
- Migrant and refugee crisis is not only current, but by all indications a long-term phenomenon. This in turn implies the need for continued cooperation and synergistic action of civil society with the authorities, both at the national level and within CEI, EU, and international community as a whole.
- The participants to the Conference of European Movements in Skopje advocate the need of wider consistency and commitment by all governmental levels of the countries of the Europe to the implementation of existing regulations, that were agreed in the past, their updating and effective governance of the migration and refugee flows, which should better interface security and humanitarian approaches.