

**Human Rights Council**

**Twenty-ninth session**

**Agenda item 3**

**Report from the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants**

**Oral statement by Terre des Hommes International Federation**

**The human face of child migration**

More than 1'750 migrants perished in the Mediterranean since the start of the year, this is more than 30 times higher than during the same period of 2014. Behind global figures, there are people, tragedies and search for a decent life. Terre des Hommes strongly welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants as well as his human rights based approach to the management of external borders of the European Union.

In 2014, among the total number of undocumented migrants who arrived in Europe, 15% were children. As a child rights organisation, Terre des Hommes calls for a specific set of measures tackling the vulnerability of children and youth; as well as for an adapted and child-focused EU migration a policy, including protection measures from the very first arrival of the child until a long-term solution, based on the best interests of the child, is found.

Through its intervention in Sicily, Terre des Hommes continues to promote a coordinated, rapid and dignified resettlement system of children and youth across Europe. However, another major worry today is the increasing number of children and youth escaping from their first temporary reception centres in South Italy. They escape to reach another European destination, but also because they simply do not get access to their right to asylum in the country where they want to stay for their future life. In this regard, Terre des Hommes runs the "Destination Unknown Campaign" with partner organisations and supports migrant children throughout the Mediterranean with field projects in Sicily (Terre des Hommes), Malta (KOPIN), Greece (ARSIS), Cyprus (Hope for Children Cyprus), Lebanon (INSAN), Egypt (Terre des Hommes), in addition to operational and advocacy work in Europe, the Middle East and at global level.

Terre des Hommes calls on again to European Heads of States and Governments to recognise that it is a European responsibility, and not the sole duty of external border countries like Italy, nor the one of few countries like Germany or Sweden that already host higher proportion of migrants than other countries in Europe. We also fully subscribe to the positions of the Special Rapporteur that the European Union needs to take stock of the durable failure of the Dublin logic and develop options for solidarity among its member states.

Finally, the report of the Special Rapporteur highlights the dangers of rising xenophobia and populism in Europe. It shows that changing the perception on migrants is key. In this regard we would like to ask the Special Rapporteur how best to do this ?