

# Conversation between M. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic, and Mr Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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The President spoke on the telephone to Mr Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on Tuesday morning.

He reiterated France's wholehearted commitment to unconditionally respecting the right of asylum in Europe and throughout the world, and to concerted, controlled management of migration flows.

By mutual agreement, they decided to call on the international community to play a more active role in refugee resettlement, in order for people needing international protection not to have to risk everything to receive it. In this respect, they highlighted the excellent cooperation established on the ground between the HCR and France in the Middle East and Africa. These protection missions, decided in Paris on 28 August 2017 in cooperation with Niger and Chad, have already enabled several hundred people to be protected, including through evacuations of people who had fallen into the hands of traffickers in Libya.

The President emphasized the need for increased cooperation between the European Union and the migrants' countries of transit and origin to prevent deadly departures by sea and provide a solution to the endless tragedies in the Mediterranean. While the issue of landings in Europe was exploited for political ends many times over the summer, the President emphasized the need to define long-term solutions, without delay, which fully respect international law, the non-refoulement principle and fundamental humanitarian principles, in the framework of increased European solidarity and responsibility and in full cooperation with the HCR and the IOM. The President and the High Commissioner agreed to work closely together on this point in the next few weeks.

On the situation in Syria, the President expressed his deep concern about the mass displacements of people caused by the regime's and its allies' military offensive in the Idlib region. He emphasized that it was a matter of the utmost urgency to establish a credible political process, which alone is able to guarantee stability and prevent further humanitarian disasters and refugee flows. He also lent France's full support to the HCR's action in Syria's neighbouring countries and the need to respect the conditions for the safe, dignified, voluntary return of refugees, which have not been met to date.

The President also regretted the American decision to stop funding UNRWA, whose services to more than five million Palestinian refugees are essential for local and regional stability. He signalled France's commitment to contributing to the necessary collective response to help UNRWA find a way out of this crisis and to make its action even more effective.

