

UN: Renzi Discusses Migration Issues

Federico Ghelli (September 21, 2016)



The Italian Prime Minister demanded Europe for changes during the opening of the United Nations summit on refugees and migrants

Last Monday, Matteo Renzi addressed 193 world leaders during the 71st UN General Assembly. He argued that saving the immigrants is a necessity, but Italy cannot fulfill this task by itself. He also invited his European colleagues to replicate Obama's example, who suggested using the government intervention to boost the economy.

"We are all shareholders in the international system," Obama said during in his last speech to the UN. On the other hand, he asked Europe to "do more" for refugees. Renzi said that Italy accepts Obama's challenge. According to him, Italy will substantially increase its financial commitment for humanitarian purposes by 30 percent.



"We will always be on the side of democracy, values, ideals, and with who has the great dream of making politics a noble and concrete activity," he said. "We take the total sense of a challenge that in our country we call humanity."

Renzi thanked Obama for the initiative he took on migrants, which involves an agreement among 50 countries to receive over 300 thousand refugees. According to Renzi, the proposal will help other countries to understand the importance of the issue on immigrants.

Renzi was accompanied on the diplomatic trip by Paolo Gentiloni, Italian minister of foreign affairs. Gentiloni said that to solve the problem of immigration all the countries need to invest in Africa. Gentiloni also recalled the importance of arriving at a common strategy that takes into account the needs of all countries.

On the theme of immigration, the Italian Prime Minister used the example of Africa as well, considering an intervention there highly necessary. He also criticized the EU for remaining silent on the matter.

"We either intervene all together in Africa, or it becomes clear that Europe is not able. In that case, we will do it alone," he said.

Renzi's comments come after the EU summit in Bratislava last week, which ended with the refusal by the Italian Prime Minister to participate in a briefing with journalists along with his German and French counterparts.

"I cannot do a joint press conference with Merkel and Hollande if I disagree with their conclusions on economy and immigration," he said. "Italy does not feel the same way as others."

Italy has to face an alarming data regarding immigrants. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the number of refugees and immigrants arrived in Europe by sea since the beginning of the year has exceeded 300 thousand.

The majority of arrivals were recorded in Italy and Greece.

Gentiloni commended the Italian Coast Guard and Navy for the help they're bringing to the immigrants.

"I'm here at the United Nations as a witness of the generosity of the Italian people to receive those who arrive on our shores," he said.

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