



THE VALETTA SUMMIT

The Valletta Summit on Migration, also called the Valletta Conference on Migration, was a summit held in Valletta, Malta, on 11–12 November 2015, in which European and African leaders discussed the European migrant crisis. The summit resulted in the EU setting up an Emergency Trust Fund to promote development in Africa, in return for African countries to help out in the crisis.

The summit was held at three venues in Valletta. The opening ceremony was held at Auberge de Castille, while the Mediterranean Conference Centre hosted the main conference. Fort Saint Elmo was used as a media centre. The summit was the largest one ever hosted in Malta, with around 4,000 people attending. The summit was held a few weeks before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2015, which was also held in Malta.

The European migrant crisis began when large numbers of migrants and refugees from various countries came to the European Union and applied for asylum. The term "crisis" has been widely used since April 2015, when a number of boats carrying migrants sank in the Mediterranean Sea, resulting in the deaths of around 1,200 people. Following the shipwreck of 19 April, the European Council held a meeting to discuss the situation of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. Among the decisions made during this meeting, EU leaders agreed to increase dialogue with the African Union and other countries involved in the migrant crisis by holding a summit in Valletta, Malta.

The summit was meant to include leaders of the countries of origin, transit or destination of the migrants. The heads of state and government of EU member states, the African Union Commission, the ECOWAS Commission, and states parties to the Khartoum and Rabat Processes were all invited to the summit, as were the Secretary-General of the United Nations and representatives from the International Organization for Migration.

On the first day, the leaders discussed a situation in which African countries would help to reduce migration across the Mediterranean, with the EU



giving Africans better access to Europe in return. According to Muscat, the meeting was "less confrontational than expected".

On 12 November, the European and African leaders signed an agreement to set up an Emergency Trust Fund to help development in African countries as well as to encourage those countries to take back migrants who arrived in Europe. The fund pledged €1.8 billion in aid, with other development assistance of €20 billion every year. The leaders also pledged action to improve the situation in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, Lake Chad and other parts of Africa to reduce the flow of refugees. They also promised to promote regular migration channels and implement policies for integrating migrants into society.

The summit ended with a Final Declaration and an Action Plan. Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, said that the migrant crisis was a "race against time" to save the Schengen Agreement.

An informal summit of EU leaders was held just after the Valletta Summit ended. The key points discussed included the threat to the Schengen Area, securing Europe's external border and relations with Turkey.

Here you can read the full text of the Valletta Summit Action Plan <http://www.webcitation.org/6czTokGkT>



EAF AT THE CHOGM 2015

Malta hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting for a second time, having successfully done so in 2005. As an island state in the Mediterranean Sea, Malta has served throughout history as a bridge between North Africa and Europe. Now, as the CHOGM host for 2015, Malta provided a platform for Commonwealth countries to come together to build bridges of cooperation. CHOGM Malta 2015 was held between the 27th and 29th of November 2015.

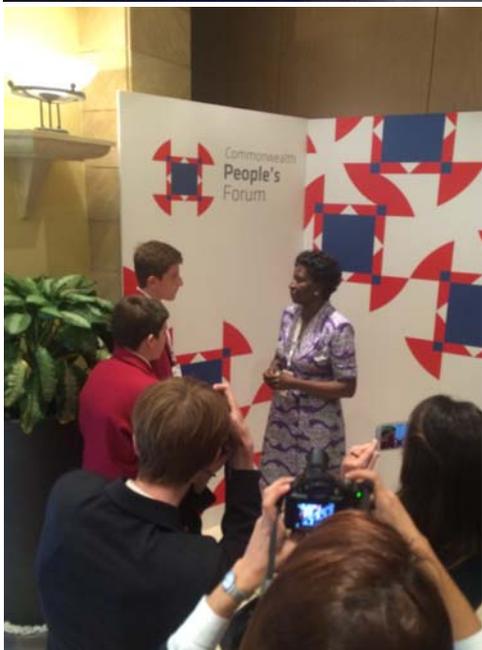
EAF Secretary General Sharon Ellul Bonici took part at the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF - the largest gathering of civil society organisations within the Commonwealth) from the 23rd till the 26th November 2015 at the Corinthia Hotel St. George's Bay, St. Julians, Malta.

Held in the run up to CHOGM, this event was jointly organised by the host government and the Commonwealth Foundation. The Forum debates were around important issues facing the people of the Commonwealth.

The CPF is the single biggest opportunity for civil society to engage with Commonwealth leaders on a wide range of issues but also to engage with one another and exchange ideas, experience and plan joint projects. The Forum also provided a valuable arena for civil society to build partnerships with the public and private sectors, offering opportunities for learning and networking.

The theme issue for CPF 2015 was "What Makes Resilient Societies?" This was foreseen to provide a civil society perspective that complements the overall CHOGM theme "Adding Global Value." It also built up on work which has been developed in Malta on resilience and vulnerability. The Forum aimed to add diverse social and cultural perspectives to the discourse, which has its roots in the experience of Small States.

The combined efforts of civil society from around the Commonwealth have produced a new declaration on governance for resilience that was submitted to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Malta.



Commonwealth
People's Forum 2015
23 - 26 November 2015
Corinthia Hotel St. George's Bay, Malta

What makes societies resilient?

Commonwealth Foundation  CHOGM Malta 2015 



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