



Ministero dell'Interno

DIPARTIMENTO PER LE LIBERTA' CIVILI E L'IMMIGRAZIONE

Mrs. President,

I personally would like to sincerely express my gratitude to you for having kindly received us this morning and reserved some of your time to meet the colleagues coming from all European countries to participate to the GDISC annual conference.

I would like to stress that we consider it a privilege as well as a pleasure to host the GDISC in Italy. We are proud of the presence here today of the representatives from all member States. They all prove the importance we attach to this event.

I'd like to acknowledge the presence of the young people from the Civil Service who are doing a very good job in the Dublin office. Let me say that they have become a part of the office and I don't know how we can do without them when they leave.

European policies are experiencing hard times in the fields of immigration and asylum as well as in their efforts to defend the important achievement of rights and freedom represented by the Schengen area.

As you know, the position of our country stands, not only on the observance of the rules that we established, both by underwriting the Geneva Convention and by transposing the EU directives in the matter, but mostly our Government action is aimed at giving full implementation to the principles contained in Art. 10 of our Constitution in the field of international protection.

I wish to reiterate it, here, in your presence and in front of my colleagues coming from so many countries: Italy is fulfilling in a dignified way its role in a very complicated international context, where too often the need for domestic



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consensus within the single countries prevails over long-term choices and above all over a common policy sharing.

As a convinced pro-European, I am personally very much concerned about it, and for this reason, together with the colleagues of the Department for civil liberties and immigration, I am endeavouring to carry out our responsibilities in compliance with the rules, but also strong of what we consider to be our rights deriving from our history, our culture and from the principles contained in the Lisbon Treaty (Articles 78 and 79).

Now, let me get straight to the issue of this year.

This Conference will focus on the issue of foreign unaccompanied minors.

This phenomenon has become increasingly impressive over the last two years not only in our country but also in many of the countries which are here represented.

I do believe that – as already said by someone more influential than me – we must be able to turn difficulties into opportunities, especially in a continent where population is ageing quickly due to the “*winter of births*” and notably in our own country where, for the first time, statistics are showing a decrease in the number of Italian citizens.

I once again take the opportunity of your presence as a witness of this first meeting to point out that at national level, the current legislation suffers from the passing of time and the framework law nr. 328 on social issues no longer meets the new scenario confronting us; in any case, we are trying - through a network of relationships with the regional and local authorities - to address this complex phenomenon which, I am sure, the Parliament will have to face at the earliest possible opportunity.



Ministero dell'Interno

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At EU level, then, I am struggling to hide my disappointment for the Commission's proposal of reforming the Dublin Regulation. Actually, also for the minors, we are far from our expectations on this issue and there is a serious risk of making even more difficult the pathways to their resettlement in one of the EU Member States, thus compromising the principle of the "best interest of the child" and shifting –as usual – the responsibility to the countries of first entry, notably to Italy.

In EU there is an ongoing large debate on the exchange of best practices and experiences about the best systems for the protection of the minors; besides the determination of the best interest of the child – BIC , the debate is dealing with such issues as age assessment, appointment of a guardian, identification procedures and specific reception services for minors.

I would like to close with the reminder of the "*Migration compact*" which I deem an important initiative launched by our Government towards the African countries.

It is clear that in areas characterized by a high birth rate, as in those of Africa, the commitment of EU Member States to allocate resources so as to reduce the development gap and therefore improve the quality of life; should offer an outstanding advantage to all people and notably to younger generations which could benefit from more prospects in their own countries in terms of education, innovation technology and mostly in terms of job opportunities.

Thank you, once again, Mrs. President, for the opportunity that you offered us today and let me thank you also because I know how much attention and feeling, really special, you pay to our commitment.

Rome, 23 June 2016

Mario Morcone