



The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, François Crépeau, today warned that the increasing competence of the European Union in the field of migration has not always been accompanied by a corresponding guarantee of rights for migrants themselves, and in particular irregular migrants.

"Within EU institutional and policy structures, migration and border control have been increasingly integrated into security frameworks that emphasize policing, defence and criminality over a rights-based approach," Mr. Crépeau said during the presentation of his special report* on EU border management to the UN Human Rights Council.

Since May 2012, the Special Rapporteur undertook a one-year comprehensive study to examine the rights of migrants in the Euro-Mediterranean region, focusing in particular on the management of the external borders of the European Union. Starting with a visit to the EU authorities in Brussels, Mr. Crépeau also carried out information-gathering missions to two key transit countries, Turkey and Tunisia, and two of the main entry points into the EU, Greece and Italy.

"I regret that within the EU policy context, irregular migration remains largely viewed as a security concern that must be stopped," the independent expert said. "This is fundamentally at odds with a human rights approach, concerning the conceptualization of migrants as individuals and equal holders of human rights."

The Special Rapporteur stressed that, "within the discourse of securitization of migration and border control, the systematic detention of irregular migrants has come to be viewed as a legitimate tool in the context of EU migration management, despite the lack of any evidence that detention serves as a deterrent."

In his report, Mr. Crépeau also focused on the 'externalization' of border control, which involves shifting the responsibility of preventing irregular migration into Europe to countries of departure or transit, as well as the insufficient responsibility-sharing within the EU with its member States who find themselves the custodians of an external EU border.

The human rights expert called on the EU authorities to address the pull-factors, namely the demand in Europe for a seasonal, low-skilled, easily exploitable workforce.

"Opening up more regular migration channels, including for low-skilled workers, thus reflecting the real labour needs of the EU, would lead to fewer irregular border crossings and less smuggling of migrants," he underscored.

On 30-31 May, Mr. Crepeau will present his report to different EU institutions in Brussels, including a public launch at the European Parliament.

(*) [Check the full report](#)

Additional links:

François Crépeau (Canada) was appointed Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants in June 2011 by the UN Human Rights Council, for an initial period of three years. As Special Rapporteur, he is independent from any government or organization and serves in his individual capacity. Mr. Crépeau is also Full Professor at the Faculty of Law of McGill University, in Montréal, where he holds the Hans and Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law.

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