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HUMAN RIGHTS, MIGRATION AND EUROPEAN VALUES

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The Lisbon Treaty (2007) has spelled out the values of the Union, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights, including rights of persons belonging to minorities. They are said to be common to the Member States in a society characterized by pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and gender equality (Article 2 TEU). These values are now part of the identity of the Union. The definition of the European values and principles is the result of permanent evolution. Indeed, the European construction was initially exclusively on an economic level. Thus, the Treaty of Rome (1957) referred only to «the safeguards of peace and freedom». But in the European Single Act (1986) the Member States declared themselves «determined to promote democracy together on the basis of fundamental rights».

The management of migratory flows is the great challenge of the 21st century. The principle of freedom to move and reside in the European Union for the European citizens is one of the cornerstones of European integration. However, this facilitation of human movements is an optical illusion: it concerns above all human flows intra-Western and applies only very weakly to movements from South to North. The EU cannot remain a spectator of geopolitical upheavals, nor remain unmoved by the multiplication of tragedies on its doorstep. However, the European migration policies currently in place seem unable to respond to the migratory crisis, contributing more to the multiplication of tragedies at sea and to the violations of the fundamental rights of men and women seeking refuge in Europe to their decrease. While the European Commission has adopted a new approach based on the aim of giving a new impetus to European migration policy, it seems important to focus on current policies in order to better understand the objectives defined by the Commission.

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