

Refugee Hotspots: Another Diversion from Western Foreign Policy

News:

French President Emmanuel Macron has announced his intention to set-up “hotspots” to handle asylum requests in Libya, where thousands are fleeing fighting in the country.

He said he hopes the plan will deter people from taking “crazy risks” and attempting the perilous journey across the Mediterranean. (The Independent 30/07/2017)

Comment:

After years of colonialism and neo colonialism, constant meddling and interference in every part of the life of those colonized, France’s President has the audacity to suggest he is solving the problem of those fleeing from another colonial project disaster, namely Libya.

Whilst Libya was colonized by Italy not France, its history is like other colonized countries. Robbed of resources, divided, facing huge debts, ruled by a puppet dictator till he was no longer useful just enough to allow basic functioning and was not willing to rule beyond the master’s commands and desires.

Today, Libya is in turmoil. After the fall of Ghaddafi, it is part of the Anglo-American struggle and other powers, like Italy and France, who do not want to lose out. As the world powers seek once again to control another strategic and resource rich land, its people are suffering.

Libya is also a gateway along North Africa to Europe and is the destination of migrants from other lands. Some are seeking economic prosperity and some are running away from war and other disasters in their own lands. Again, the colonial powers cannot deny their policies have caused many crisis and conflicts, and as such, they are the reason why people have to leave.

Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR’s new special envoy to the central Mediterranean, said that by the time migrants reached Libya, it was often too late. It is thought there are 300,000 Africans from outside Libya try to get across to Europe or to get some work in Libya. They are living in Libyan detention center’s or in warehouses or so-called “connection houses” in the hands of traffickers. The Un, he said are trying to dissuade people going to Libya in the first place (Reuters 18/07/2017). Refugees are very vulnerable in these centres, yet Marcon is proposing a similar set up.

Australia also has detention centres in the Pacific island of Nauru which have been investigated and reported to be plagued with abuse and mistreatment.

So, how would Western countries run centres that can possibly assist refugees? If the mindset is that the people in centres don’t deserve help or the aim is to keep them out of Europe for as long as possible or to send them off elsewhere, do we really see any solution in this plan?

Islam’s view of migrants or people escaping persecution is well known. At the time of RasulAllah (saw), it was the bond of brotherhood that was forged between the Ansar and Muhajireen that led to stability in Madinah. Later, it was documented that during the Spanish Inquisition, Jews fled to the Khilafah state. Khalifah at the time of Beyazid Ath-Thani sent a navy to Spain in order to save the Muslims and non-Muslims from the massacre by the Christians. He ordered his Wulaa (governors) to accept the Spanish Muslims and non-Muslims with a friendly reception. Finally, he ordered the death of anyone who killed the non-Muslim refugees and refused entry into the Khilafah if they abused them.

The problem of refugees and migrants is a problem caused by Europe, yet it seeks to wash its hands of this by offering bad, unworkable and more oppressive solutions to the victims of its policies past and present. The resumption of the Islamic way of life under the Khilafah, based upon the method of the Prophethood, alone will serve to assist people and only this system will establish foreign relations in accordance to the commands of Allah swt: ﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ **“And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)”** [al-Anbiya’ 21:107]

As long as foreign policy is based on greed, control and domination of others, the fall out will continue and the problems will keep coming.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Nazia Rehman – Pakistan