European Economic and Social Committee
Press Release

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**The EESC standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the European Commission in managing the migration crisis and working to secure a social Europe**

**Georges Dassis**, President of the European Economic and Social Committee, reiterated European civil society organisations' support in this to **Jean-Claude Juncker**, President of the European Commission, when the two met today.

This increased support entails greater political cooperation between the Commission and the EESC so as to bring the European institutions closer to the people of Europe and to defend the values and major successes of the Union, such as the **achievements of the Schengen agreement** and the Union's achievements in the social domain and the consolidation thereof.

Concerned by the dramatic situation of **refugees** in Europe, as well as that of **migrants**, the Committee is fully committed to helping pinpoint concrete solutions, particularly by organising and sending observers to those countries most affected by the arrival of thousands of immigrants. The Committee has in fact already carried out visits to hotspots in the following countries: Greece, Austria, Sweden, Malta, Italy, Poland, Denmark, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Croatia and Turkey. In the wake of these visits, concrete recommendations will be discussed at the Committee's March plenary session, which will be attended by Commissioner Avramopoulos.

Following the European Commission's announcement on the upcoming launch of consultation on the European pillar of social rights (March), the Committee could hammer out a proposal with this in mind.

"In our continent of Europe, suffering an economic and social crisis and facing an unprecedented influx of refugees, we must defend the European social model now more than ever by stressing the role of social investment as a factor of production, as well as the part played by effective, reliable social protection systems to combat downward social mobility", stated **Georges Dassis** on the margins of the meeting.

The Commission President, Mr Juncker, was also invited to take part in the 2016 Civil Society Day, which will have as its theme "Living together in our societies", as well as a Committee plenary session and the Conference on "Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union", to be held at the end of 2016.

**For more information, please contact:**

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*The European Economic and Social Committee represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. It is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process. The Committee has 350 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union.*

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