**5. Security Concerns in the Middle East and North African Regions**

5.1. COSAC draws attention to the enormous challenges that the situation in the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region is posing to the EU, namely the expansion of terrorist organisations and the catastrophic human tragedies brought about by human trafficking in the Mediterranean. Appalled by the scale of the recent tragedies in the Mediterranean, COSAC expresses deepest condolences to the families of victims.

5.2. COSAC notes that the EU still lacks a clear approach to the challenges posed by the Mediterranean basin and, in particular, to cross-Mediterranean migration, and underlines that it has a responsibility to take all steps necessary to prevent recurrence of tragedies such as those recently witnessed in the Mediterranean.

5.3. In this context, COSAC welcomes the commitment of the extraordinary European Council of 23 April 2015 expressed in its Statement to take a number of specific measures aimed at strengthening the EU’s presence at sea, fighting traffickers in accordance with international law, preventing illegal migration flows and reinforcing internal solidarity and responsibility. COSAC takes note of the European Council´s statement that the EU´s immediate priority is to prevent more people from dying at sea and emphasizes EU:s duty to protect and save lives. In this context COSAC underlines the importance of legal routes to access asylum in the EU. COSAC notes the joint responsibility to receive and accept people in need.

5.4. COSAC stresses the need to develop joint measures in close cooperation with the relevant agencies against criminal networks of migrant traffickers, in order to prevent them from earning money by placing lives at risk; COSAC calls on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) and the European Commission as a whole to work together with relevant EU and UN agencies and international organisations to increase cooperation with the countries of origin and transit.

5.5. COSAC looks forward to the European Commission's Communication on the European Agenda for Migration that will enable developing a more systemic and geographically comprehensive approach to migration. Following the latest humanitarian tragedies in the Mediterranean, COSAC expects the Commission to show the strongest possible ambition and come up with common European solutions in the spirit of solidarity and sharing of responsibility among Member States