

West policies root cause of refugee crisis in Europe: Lawyer

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Press TV has conducted an interview with Edward Corrigan, an international human rights lawyer from Ontario, to ask for his insight into the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe.

The following is a rough transcription of the interview.

Press TV: The message by the United Nations to the EU is clear, it says: Do what you're supposed to do, but do it quickly and completely. How much do you see European countries fit and ready to shoulder the burden of refugees?

Corrigan: Well you have to applaud Germany for indicating that it's willing to accept 800,000 refugees. The other countries some of which, I think, have helped caused the problem Britain and France and to lesser extent Italy are not shouldering the burden even though the refugee influxes are because of the attacks on Afghanistan and the attacks on Iraq, the attack on Syria and of course Libya which Italy also participated with England and France and destroyed the country now we have a failed state, which was not producing refugees in the past at least in any significant degree. Now there's a flood of refugees coming from Libya, there's a flood of refugees coming from Syria which of course is horrific. Twenty five percent of Lebanon's population right now is refugees. And you've got refugees in Turkey, which of course it doesn't have clean hands when it comes to its intervention into the Syrian Civil War and is partisan and is trying to destabilize Syria to overthrow the government of Syria. But you have Britain and France, which are both wealthy countries and both have participated [in causing the refugee crisis]. I have heard important information that American troops and French troops are on the ground in Syria, from the contact that I have, in some of the camps and treating injured people. But you have countries that are wealthy, which are shouldering the burden like Germany, but then you've got poor countries like Greece and Hungary, which don't have the financial capacity to do so and at minimum should be getting substantial funds from the EU as a unit. And of course there are elements of xenophobia, racism and the fact that some of these countries of course don't have the capacity to absorb the refugees. But if Lebanon can absorb probably half a million refugees, I think, Europe can do far better than it's doing.

Press TV: The EU has always been trying to speak with one voice on common issues facing the bloc. But on this issue it seems to be inconsistency among the members and the statesmen. How much can this issue, the issue of refugees further divide the EU member states, do you think?

Corrigan: Well, actually people say that may be the most serious issue that has confronted the EU certainly in the recent period. And there is a major dispute and the EU is fracturing. Some people don't have the economic resources and in fact are punished for other reasons for example, I think, Greece has been punished because of its economic crisis, but also because it for example granted permission to Russia to build a pipeline through Greece, which undercut Ukraine and would bring Russian gas and oil into Europe. So, I think that's a fact that certainly politics has played a role. Some countries have a history of racism against Blacks and against Africans and against Arabs. And there are always this concern about having too many Muslims in Europe. So, there are mixed motives, some are legitimate, some of which quite frankly are not legitimate.