AVİM Commentary • No: 2017 / 16 •

THE EU CONTRADICTS ITSELF BY CRITICISING TRUMP FOR BUILDING THE WALL ALONG THE US-MEXICO BORDER

Hazel ÇAĞAN ELBİR

Analyst

US President Donald Trump, who came to the forefront during the United States Presidential elections with his xenophobic and anti-immigration rhetoric, has promptly started to fulfill his election promises once he came power. In particular, the idea of building a wall along the US-Mexico border and the visa ban brought to the citizens of seven countries with predominantly Muslim population (Iraq, Iran, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen) prompted negative reaction from the international public. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union (EU) External Relations and Security Policy, is among those who have criticized Trump regarding both the wall and the visa ban the most. However, Mogherini's statements are contradictory when the EU's policies on refugees are considered. The wired walls along Turkeys borders with Bulgaria and Greece have been financed by EU funds. Additionally, the EU approved requests for the continuation of border checks by suspending Schengen visas for three months to prevent the entrance of asylum seekers into the five European countries of Germany, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

During the election propaganda of US President Donald Trump, his inflammatory statements directed towards women, Mexicans, Muslims and migrants was criticized by the American and international public. In many countries, the anti-Trump marches and demonstrations are concrete signs of these reactions. Some heads of state and senior state officials are also criticizing Trump. The European Parliament (EP) has also dealt with the issue of the US visa ban imposed by US President Trump regarding the citizens of the seven Muslim-majority countries. High Representative of the EU External Relations and Security Policy Mogherini stated that no one can be deprived of the rights he or she has because of their place of birth, religion, or ethnic origin. Mogherini, who is among the vocal critics of Trump, stated that they were opposed to walls in the EU and that they were enthusiastic when the walls were destroyed.[1] Like Mogherini, EP party leaders have also reacted in the same way against Trump. A notable exception to the criticisms coming from European politicians and leaders is Nigel Farage, the former leader of the United Kingdom's Independence Party (UKIP). In opposition to the calls that Europe should close the door and Trumps entry, Farage said that anti-Trump statements are no different from being anti-American. Also, Farage stated that Trump should visit the European Parliament in order to solve the disagreements.[2]

Mogherini, who also warned that Trump should be careful about what might transpire in his country and advises Trump about the issue of refugees, seems forgotten that the EU has erected razor-barbed wired walls along Turkeys borders with Bulgaria and Greece because she claimed that EU does not erect walls. She explained what has been erected along the border is not a wall but is instead a method used in directing the fight for human rights and against crime organizations amongst the complexity of security issues. In addition to border walls in the EU, EU has endorsed the continuation of the border controls by suspending the Schengen visas for three months to prevent refugees from entering the EU, as well as Germany, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.[3]

Currently, the attitude of the EU, which has extended the lengthy of the barbed wire wall between Turkey and Bulgaria to 146 km, poses a problem not only for the asylum seekers but also for the village people living in the near-border regions. A large majority of the refugees passing over the wall in various ways are captured by the security forces of Bulgaria and sent back to the border of Turkey. It is also necessary to mention the damage to nature caused by the barbed wire walls. It is known that endangered wild life species have died by becoming stuck in the barbs of the wired walls.

In 2015, the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron said that the wall along the border of Bulgaria was an example of the protection of the EU borders against refugee flows.[4] In this case, even though Mogherini says that building walls does not coincide with the understanding of European Unions security, Mogherini was also in charge during the period when British Prime Minister Cameron praised the Bulgarian policies on border control in the midst of the asylum crisis. As a matter of fact, Mogherini assumed her position as the High Representative in charge of EU External Relations and Security Policy on 1 November 2014.[5] As such, the controversial nature of Trumps plan to build an additional wall along the Tortilla wall along the US-Mexico border cannot in any way mask the contradictory nature of the High Representative in charge of the EU External Relations and Security Policy Mogherinis claim that EU does not build walls.

[1] The Brief: Is the EU-Turkey migrant deal as bad as Donald Trumps wall? http://www.euractiv.com/section/all/news/the-brief-is-the-eu-turkey-migrant-deal-as-bad-as-donald-trumps-wall/

[2] Avrupa Parlementosunda Donald Trump tartışması, Mogherini:Trump ile aynı görüşte değiliz http://www.abhaber.com/56814-2/

[3] The Brief: Is the EU-Turkey migrant deal as bad as Donald Trumps wall? http://www.euractiv.com/section/all/news/the-brief-is-the-eu-turkey-migrant-deal-as-bad-as-donald-trumps-wall/

[4] David Cameron Praises Bulgarian Policies On Border Control in Migrants Crisis http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3345308/David-Cameron-inspects-Bulgarias-beefed-border.html

[5] European Commission The Commissioners High Representative (2014- 2019) Federica Mogherini https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2014-2019/mogherini_en#timeline

About the Author :

Hazel Çağan-Elbir is an analyst in AVİM. Çağan-Elbir continues her studies in Political Economy doctorate program at Atılım University.

To cite this article: ELBİR, Hazel ÇAĞAN. 2026. "THE EU CONTRADICTS ITSELF BY CRITICISING TRUMP FOR BUILDING THE WALL ALONG THE US-MEXICO BORDER." Center For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No.2017 / 16. February 21. Accessed November 22, 2026. https://www.avim.org.tr/public/index.php/en/Yorum/THE-EU-CONTRADICTS-ITSELF-BY-CRITICISING-TRUMP-FOR-BUILDING-THE-WALL-ALONG-THE-US-MEXICO-BORDER-2

Süleyman Nazif Sok. No: 12/B Daire 3-4 06550 Çankaya-ANKARA / TÜRKİYE
Tel: +90 (312) 438 50 23-24 • **Fax**: +90 (312) 438 50 26
@avimorgtr
https://www.facebook.com/avrasyaincelemelerimerkezi
E-Mail: info@avim.org.tr
http://avim.org.tr

© 2009-2025 Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM) All Rights Reserved