

MIGRATION CRISIS

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3 **WHEREAS**, millions of people have been displaced in the Middle East and North
4 Africa by violence, war, persecution and political turmoil, the fallout of which has had a
5 disproportionate impact in Europe, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey; and

6 **WHEREAS**, this is a crisis of massive proportions that requires swift and decisive
7 action; and

8 **WHEREAS**, communities and countries that have stepped up and agreed to host
9 refugees have seen a rise in suspicion, xenophobia and religious intolerance, while
10 other countries have closed their borders to refugees entirely; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the White House has pledged to lift the number of worldwide refugees
12 that the United States accepts to 100,000; former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has
13 called for the admission of 65,000 Syrians; 18 mayors from major cities—many with
14 large AFT locals, including Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City
15 and Philadelphia—have pledged to open their communities to greater refugee
16 resettlement; and joint statements from 72 members of the U.S. House of
17 Representatives and 14 U.S. Senators have added to the growing wave of public
18 support; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the United States and the countries in the Gulf, which are among the
20 world's richest countries and are deeply engaged in conflicts in the Middle East, must
21 accept a fair share of refugees; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the AFT believes that the United States is a nation whose past and
23 future are based on building bridges, not walls, as we have consistently voiced our
24 support for the rights of migrants and their families through various AFT policy
25 resolutions, including “International Humanitarian Crisis at the U.S. Border” (2014) and
26 “Support a Fair and Just Immigration Policy” (2008), and have supported Education
27 International in passing “The Right to Education for Displaced People, Refugee and
28 Stateless Children” (2015) and “Migration, Professional Diversity and Racism” (2015):
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30 **RESOLVED**, that the American Federation of Teachers expresses its solidarity with
31 first responders in the transit and resettlement countries, including staff of the United
32 Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and all workers whose unions are affiliates of
33 Education International, Public Services International, the AFL-CIO and the International
34 Trade Union Confederation; and

35 **RESOLVED**, that the AFT will continue to work with all parties to promote a global
36 migration policy that emphasizes human and labor rights and inclusive development
37 that addresses important issues such as quality of life and having opportunities to use
38 the knowledge and skills they bring with them from their home countries; and

39 **RESOLVED**, that the AFT will be diligent in pressing the U.S. Congress and the
40 Obama administration to take bold leadership action, and that we will inform and
41 engage AFT membership as events move forward:

- 42 • the AFT will lobby the U.S. government to join with our German and other
43 European allies and declare our intentions to rapidly resettle hundreds of
44 thousands of men, women and children, as well as greatly increase foreign
45 assistance to support international refugee agencies and frontline countries such
46 as Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey; and

47 • the AFT will communicate to the U.S. interagency delegation to the U.N. Global
48 Forum on Migration and Development about the urgent need to work with allies
49 on developing a common global strategy of fair-share resettlement across
50 countries including the United States; and

51 **RESOLVED**, that the AFT will provide guidance and support (such as teaching
52 materials) to our affiliates in host communities in the United States as they support
53 families and children seeking to make a home in our country, which includes attending
54 school and participating fully and with dignity in our economy; and

55 **RESOLVED**, that the AFT will fully engage in advocacy campaigns with our partners
56 in Education International and Public Services International and with labor and
57 community as they seek to fulfill the United Nations' newly developed Sustainable
58 Development Goals for promoting sustainable human, social and economic
59 development.