

Resolutions and Declarations Bureau Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria 13-15 April 2018

5) The destruction of fortress Europe or what we need are safe and legal migration routes!

Signed by Jusos Germany

In Article 2 of the European human rights charta it says that every human being has the right to live. If this is to be taken seriously then this means that human beings can flee to a safe country if they experience life threatening situations. A right to live must mean a right to seek refuge without being threatened.

However, unfortunately we note that the European Union is not handling the situation according to these standards. Instead of representing a shelter for refugees, the EU sets up more and more external borders and turns into a deadly fortress. Between January and July 2017 at least 2500 people drowned in the Mediterranean sea while trying to flee to Europe. Around 300 000 have ventured to cross the Mediterranean since 2016 according to UN numbers, even though there are numerous ways to avoid this. Everyone who has to risk their life to come to Europe shows the European Union how much its aspiration of being a role model regarding human rights is expiring. The European Union tries to move the European borders to the Sahara region to make it harder for refugees to reach the European continent.

On the pretext of fighting against terrorism and smugglers border installations are being set up and the border control gets militarized. The EU member states no longer back away from cooperating with dictators in this matter. Today the way through the desert is as dangerous as the following route on the sea. The desert represents a forgotten cemetery and NGO's are not able to negotiate with the Northern African countries because safety and constitutional protection is not guaranteed. Instead of solving the inner European fight concerning the acceptance of refugees and confronting the racist reflexes of some member states they displace the problem solving to somewhere else. We have to experience how fences are built protected by armed force, that people in positions of power wrap up deals with tyrants and refugees are forced to live in detention camps. Rather than protecting refugees, we protect the European Union from refugees entering.

1. Safe migration routes now!

If there were safe migration routes no one would need to flee on unsafe boots via the Mediterranean. For example entering the EU via airplane would be much more secure and cheaper, but it is illegal according to the EU guideline 2001/51/EG/: airlines are being held responsible if a passenger is being dismissed in the country of destination. The company has to pay a fine, organize the journey back and pay for the accommodation and provisions until the return journey. This means that people without a visa are not being transported.

This is why we demand from the EU:

- It needs to be legal when people try to cross borders whether they come to a country via air, sea or on the ground. Transit included
- Italy introduced humanitarian visas for the legal travel and the reimbursement of travel costs in the European Union. Until there is an understanding the German government needs to take a high amount of resources for the organisation and the financing of the the entry and the safe transport to the European Union.

- The humanitarian visas are free of charge and non-bureaucratic and available in the embassies and consulates. Therefore the embassies need to increase their staff immediately to minimize the waiting corridors.
- to resume the family reunification of refugees and enable the fast and non bureaucratic allocation of humanitarian visas
- removal of the EU guideline 2001/51/EG

2. Closure of the torture camps in Libya

The UN coordinator for Libya Martin Kobler describes the situation in the Libyan camps as terrible, appalling and horrendous. The people are malnourished and are exposed to acts of arbitrary violence and jammed together/penned up in a localized manner. There are stories of systematic executions by shooting. Many of these camps are operated privately by militias. According to estimates the Libyan government doesn't have more than 30% of the Libyan territory under their control.

This is why we demand:

- All people who find themselves in Libyan camps have to be resettled into other camps. A retransition of refugees to Libya mustn't be an option.
- The international criminal court has to deal with the violation of human rights that have happened in the camps.
- Any support of the European Union that could play into the hands of the autonomous militia for example through members of the Lybian coast guard has to be stopped immediately.

3. Refugee camps according to UN standards

The financial equipment of UN organisations to help and accommodate refugees needs to be improved. The UNHCR and the World Food Programme are forced repeatedly to shorten the food rations and reduce the basic standards in the camps and are not able to protect people from freezing in the winter. These conditions are irresponsible.

This is why we demand:

- A long term increase of spaces in the resettlement programme
- A reform of the resettlement program: education level, heritage and religious beliefs should not determine whether people are chosen for the program. Every case should be analyzed separately and the question should be whether people are facing a state of emergency.
- Directly after the arrival refugees should get psychological and health check ups/treatment.
- The accommodation of refugees on the European mainland needs to be improved as well

4. European sea rescue programme

We demand:

- The European border control agency Frontex needs to be abolished instantaneously. It embodies the militarization of the European border control and the violation of human rights. As the agency cannot be controlled democratically it needs to be abolished as such.
- The rehabilitation of a European sea rescue mission based on the model of Mare Nostrum with additional resources and finances. This can be achieved by the renaming of the Sofia mission. It is the responsibility of the European Union to make sure that its external borders do not resemble mass burial sites. In the current situation this can only be guaranteed with an organized sea rescue mission.
- The states with southern EU external borders need support in integrating the thousands of refugees. The refugees that enter the European Union must be distributed among the member states according to a specified quota. If a state takes less refugees as agreed, it has to pay the states that have taken more refugees. This agreement can also be facilitated if a certain amount of EU finances is cut that the state would normally receive. The obligation concerning the compensation would stay in effect/remain in place. Moreover minimum standards within the EU and some of them state specific have to be agreed upon regarding accommodation, support and asylum procedure.
- A return to unsafe countries should be excluded. The Non- Refoulement principle of the Geneva convention on refugees is valid without restrictions.

5. No forceful holding back of refugees

The so-called refugee deal with Turkey and other informal understandings/agreements with other Mediterranean states considering the practice of violently holding back refugees have to be terminated. They

are not justified neither because of moral nor humanitarian reasons. They do not conform with/are contrary to international law and create a situation where the European Union is susceptible to blackmail.

6. Stopping the criminalization of humanitarian aid

Since the European sea rescue mission was terminated more than a dozen NGOs have taken responsibility to save people from drowning in the Mediterranean sea. Around 40 % of the rescues that have been performed during the last 1,5 years were done by private aids. This shift of responsibility from the states towards private aids as such constitutes a reason for criticism. In the last few months this humanitarian aid had to face downright/proper criminalization. Right wing movements in Italy, Austria, and Germany raise absurd allegations, that the NGOs would cooperate with the smugglers and facilitate smuggler activities. Without any evidence and even though the NGOs are denying these allegations the German minister for the interior repeated these accusations and the Italian government obliged the NGOs to agree to a code of conduct which could restrict their work massively.

As the Libyan coast guard proclaimed a search and rescue zone in front of Libya's coast annexing international territorial waters the European Union did not react at all, even though it finances and supports the setup of the Libyan coast guard.

The sea rescue NGOs feel threatened regarding massive assaults and threats by the Libyan coast guard, many of them have abandoned or restricted their safety missions. However governments do not show any effort to compensate this, which makes the situation in front of the Libyan coast even more dangerous for refugees than it has been before.

This is why we demand:

- An end of the criminalization of humanitarian aid on the Mediterranean sea by not only the German government but all EU member state governments.
- The support for the setup of the Libyan coast guard has to be stopped until the Libyan coast guard abstains from assaulting NGOs and abandons the search and rescue zone.
- Security guarantees for NGOs that are operating on the Mediterranean sea by the European Union. No humanitarian organisation can be forced to take armed staff on board.

7. The European Union with its 28 member states absorbs more than 50% of the global resources/funds of development cooperation.

Global inequalities are the main reason for migration but could not be diminished.

Since migration has increased in 2015 the European Union has allocated more financial means to support the border control in the Southern Mediterranean states. Additionally the long-term resources for development cooperation were used to provide North and West Africa to fight the causes of migration. Development cooperation has to be focused on international solidarity to achieve its goals. Immediate actions are only helpful if they help fight urgent humanitarian crises and seeking refuge becomes an option rather than a necessity.

This is why we demand:

- An honest discussion about the fight against the causes of migration. The most important part is how to handle climate change, global conflicts and perhaps most of all global inequalities.

The acknowledgement of seeking refuge as a legitimate way to improve one's individual life situation. Migration is caused primarily by global inequalities. This is why making it possible for people to seek refuge is one of the hardest measures to implement but at the same time the most effective one. International solidarity regardless if the individual migration motive is war or conflict, hindrance of societal or political participation, violation of physical integrity or economical.