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Switzerland

No to Frontex and a murderous asylum policy

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Frontex is the agency responsible for “protecting” the borders of the European Union. Founded in 2005, it is now co-financed by Switzerland to the tune of CHF14 million [€13.6 million]. This amount allows the development of a sophisticated arsenal of intervention equipment. On 15 May, Swiss citizens will vote on an increase of CHF 14 million to CHF 61 million [€59.3 million] in this subsidy by 2027, as well as on increased staffing.

This increase represents a significant militarisation of the management of Europe's borders. Migrant aid groups and international organizations accuse Frontex of human rights violations. In the Balkans, Frontex illegally pushes people out from certain borders. In the Mediterranean, Frontex is witnessing the destruction of boat engines and the abandonment of people at sea without lifting a finger. In Switzerland, Frontex organizes “special flights” to forcibly return migrants who are restrained and handcuffed, regardless of their physical and moral health.

A racist and brutal policy

Frontex is the centrepiece of a brutal, racist and murderous European asylum policy, which militarises borders and seeks to push people condemned to exile ever further away. The EU is also involved in the management of the southern borders of countries bordering Europe (Libya, Turkey and so on), in order to strengthen barriers to access to its territory. A process that participates in the violence suffered by migrants in these territories (kidnapping, torture, rape and more), decried by the international press.

It is argued by bourgeois circles that opposition to Frontex would lead to Switzerland's expulsion from the Schengen area. Nothing could be further from the truth! Investigations into human rights violations and the management of Frontex have led the European Parliament itself to freeze part of its budget. In these circumstances, Switzerland can refuse to give Frontex a blank cheque, without calling into question its participation in the Schengen agreements.

This migration policy, which aims to limit and prohibit access to its territory, has only one consequence: to make migration routes increasingly less safe, increasingly deadly. Frontex is the armed wing of a fortress Europe that we do not want!

Only the political will is lacking to organize the reception of exile with dignity. The current wave of Ukrainian migration demonstrates that solidarity and humanity are possible.

It is no longer sustainable to reject and criminalize exiles according to their origin, nor to let people – women and LGBTIQ+ people above all – suffer the violence of the migration route, the administration and Swiss laws once they arrive here. Just as we cannot abandon civilians being bombed a few hundred kilometres from Switzerland, we cannot continue to let boats sink in the Mediterranean and let people condemned to exile die!

Switzerland's migration policy needs to be thoroughly revised to ensure a reception worthy of all. A no to Frontex on 15 May will be the first step in this revision, which cannot wait.

PS:

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