

## **International Migrants Day sees more than 40 actions to Abolish Frontex and end the EU border regime**

20 December 2021 – On International Migrants Day, Saturday 18 December 2021, the call to Abolish Frontex and end the devastating EU border regime resounded in over 40 actions in 13 countries in Europe and Africa. With a variety of actions — from information sharing to demonstrations to blockades — groups and organisations working together in the international Abolish Frontex network showed their resistance against the deadly EU border and migration policies.

At several locations a voice message from the Refugees in Libya, struggling in Tripoli for their lives and a safer future, was played. Actions also called attention to other urgent issues: the horrific play with migrant lives at the Polish-Belarussian border, the drownings of people on the move in the Mediterranean and other deaths caused by Fortress Europe’s racist and violent policies, pushbacks, the role of the arms industry and the expansion of Frontex.

More than 44.764 people have died trying to reach Fortress Europe. In Tripoli, Libya, almost 3000 refugees are protesting outside the UNHCR headquarters following the mass detention of 5000 people and the killing of six people in early October. Many of them have tried to cross the Mediterranean Sea in an attempt to reach Europe, but were pulled back by the so-called Libyan coast guard. Frontex collaborates with this ‘coastguard’ to force people back to Libya where they face torture and other severe human rights abuses in detention camps.

Frontex's new armed border guard corps has already been deployed to several countries, adding to the militarisation of European borders. And the agency has also become active in stopping refugees crossing from France and Belgium to the UK. The UK's increasingly hostile migration policies have recently resulted in the death of 27 people on the move, when their dinghy capsized on the Channel.

Meanwhile, thousands of people are facing violence at the Polish-Belarus border and are being pushed back into Belarus. Instead of providing help and allowing them safe passage into the EU, Margaritis Schinas, vice president of the European Commission, has proposed a plan to officially restrict asylum rights at the Belarussian border.

A spokesperson for the Abolish Frontex network, which consists of 120 organisations and groups, said: “The over 40 actions calling to Abolish Frontex and end the EU border regime on Saturday show that more and more people have had enough of the deadly and racist EU migration policies. We will build on this action day to continue our campaign and fight for freedom of movement for everyone and for a world where people aren't forced to leave their homes to search for a safe and livable future.”

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For media inquiries: [press@abolishfrontex.org](mailto:press@abolishfrontex.org)

An overview of the actions on 18 December with images and videos is available at: <https://abolishfrontex.org/blog/2021/12/19/over-40-actions-to-abolish-frontex-and-end-the-eu-border-regime-on-international-migrants-day/>