

# Migration & the European Union: break the cycle of death, restore dignity and defend freedom of movement

Tuesday 5 April 2016, by [BA Mamadou](#) (Date first published: 10 March 2016).

**This report was made to the February/March 2016 meeting of the International Committee of the Fourth International. The list of demands with which it ends were incorporated into the statement adopted at that meeting: “Internationalism from below against Fortress Europe” [1].**

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## **To end the deaths is necessary to do away with borders**

In recent decades, some 1.2 million migrants made the journey to Europe by land and by sea. But in 2014 alone, 600,000 people applied for asylum in the EU area and that number almost doubled between 2015 and 2016.

Since the Schengen Agreement was ratified in 1985, Europe, on the pretext that it had eliminated its internal borders, has been developing a huge political, legal, police and military arsenal of surveillance, control and repression against migration. During this period, Europe has continuously developed its means of repression against human movement, a whole series of instruments, both before and after Frontex, designed to consolidate and strengthen this political strategy of closing the door to migrants and hunting them down.

These instruments range from the SIS (integrated Schengen Information), to Europol (European Police Office), and include CRATE (centralised record of surveillance equipment - a real arsenal of war comprising planes, helicopters, ships, satellites and drones), RABIT (rapid reaction force), the FAST TRACK (electronic recording of entry and immigrants outputs), ICONet (an information and coordination network via the Internet of migration flows), ESTA (electronic system of travel

authorisation), VIS (integrated system on visas), Frontex, the paramilitary agency for surveillance and border control, and EUROSUR, the latest and most sophisticated migrant surveillance system.

### **Three decades of bad policy**

In 1999, through the Tempere Programme, Europe decided to coordinate its immigration policy to a degree never seen before. From Schengen to The Hague, the strategy of tightening immigration policies developed apace. The Seville Summit in June 2002 reinforced this strategy by creating a network of immigration liaison officers (ILO). In 2003, the Dublin II agreements fixed the rules for the biometric database EURODAC. In 2004, the Hague Programme proposed, in agreement with the UNHCR, to deal with asylum requests, and by extension immigration requests, overseas. Along with this came a Visa Information Service, VIS, introducing an extremely restrictive policy for granting visas at European consulates in the migrant's country of origin, supposedly as a way of strengthening the fight against illegal immigration. This array of surveillance mechanisms and restrictions on movement fuelled the policy of immigration control which led to the creation, on 26 October 2004, of a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX).

The "European patrol against illegal immigration" - a European Border Control Network - carried out in 2006 in the Canaries, was Frontex's first large-scale operation. Since then, Frontex has conducted several hundred official and clandestine operations, by air, land and sea, hunting for immigrants, mainly on the southern and eastern "borders". These operations have become more and more regular, and are sometimes supported by NATO.

In 2005, Frontex, which is based in Warsaw, had a budget of just over 6 million euros. Now it is several hundred million euros. The Frontex fleet has more than a hundred ships, about 25 helicopters, more than twenty aeroplanes, including drones and more than four hundred bits of surveillance equipment of various kinds (including satellites, radars, as well as biometric and other kinds of detection devices). It has a staff of 300 employees, in addition to its various operational personnel. In 2010, Europe decided to increase the strategic role and powers of Frontex, giving it not only the ability to acquire its own equipment (buying or renting its military arsenal) but also to organise charter flights for mass deportations.

With EUROSUR (the border surveillance system), linked to FAST TRACK (the electronic recording of migrants' entry and exit) as well as ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), Frontex became the most sophisticated and powerful military-police system invented in Europe since the Second World War, to hunt down people just for being immigrants.

It is a war arsenal superior to that of many countries in the world. The beefing up of Frontex's repressive capacity, and thus of Europe's whole immigration policy, has made it much more difficult and the dangerous for those trying to reach Europe. The more restrictive immigration policy became, the more deadly became the odyssey undertaken by immigrants.

Like Frontex, the detention centres and the administrative detention of immigrants are also parts of a political system to control and restrict mobility, which dehumanise and perpetuate the colonial history of relations between Europe and much of the rest of the world.

The consequence of this policy is that Europe's frontiers have become real open-air cemeteries. The murder of immigrants on Europe's borders is a reality that can no longer be concealed. Immigration has become not only a business, but also a policy of death, deliberately used to deter and blackmail those who want to migrate, as well as their countries of origin and/or transit.

To stop the successive tragedies on Europe's coasts, especially the Mediterranean and the Aegean, which has led to tens of thousands of deaths in recent decades, and dramatically intensified with the war in Syria, it is urgent to develop an alternative policy to current migration policies and their devastating consequences. This must inevitably draw a variety of experiences in the struggle to build resistance and develop a different immigration policy.

Given the current context of political dislocation of the social movement and the programmatic retreat of traditional political and trade union organisations in this area, we really need to start a militant process of building political responses. This process should initiate a movement, that not only shifts the paradigm of migration policy, but above all confronts and breaks with the current political model that underpins the European Union's immigration policies. The defeat of this politics of death inevitably involves the defeat of capitalism.

To respond to the tragedy of these deaths and defend the freedom of movement, we have to oppose Europe as a political mechanism for building exclusive, racist, sexist and macho geographies, for turning human mobility into a commodity, for the closure, outsourcing and militarisation of borders, and for the criminalisation of migrants. We have to demand an end to Frontex. Unfortunately, European immigration policy is part of the historical continuity of imperialism within the capitalist system, which reduces mobility to a business opportunity and a geopolitical chess game.

## **Universalism and borders**

Between Slavery and the Holocaust, between Colonisation and the struggles for National Liberation, the last half of the twentieth century seemed finally to suggest that people could be guaranteed the freedom to come and go, as an undisputed achievement of civilisation. And for a long time we were led to believe that the ability to travel, easily and conveniently, were irreversible signs of progress and civilisation. For this benefits contact, proximity and, above all, could in theory dissolve the symbolic and real boundaries between people. The ease, convenience and wide availability of such travel without any kind of hindrance are the basic components of freedom of movement. And, in essence, the idea of "modernity" and "progress" had built a kind of consensus around various social, legal and political conventions on freedom of movement. From all these conventions - both those that resulted from an acknowledged historical trauma, like the Holocaust, as well as those that resulted from hidden or denied historical traumas, like slavery and colonisation - one thing is clear: law and rights are political instruments that depend on the balance of forces in dispute and on the interests that are being defended and protected. And international law, which supposedly is based on the principle of universality, also depends on this reality, where it is the bourgeois state that defines the limits of who belongs to a given political community and the freedoms associated with that.

In fact, contemporary political and legal universalism is part of the problem and leaves much to be desired because, apart from being Eurocentric, imperialist and capitalist, it is more abstract and rhetorical than concrete, because it is born of the arrogance of European civilisation which, when it sought to "civilise", in fact enslaved and colonised in the name of its supposed "moral superiority".

Centuries after millions of people were forced to move en masse, not as people but as commodities, after years in which millions of people, in their own countries across most of the planet, as a result of colonial imperialism which fuelled capitalism, could only move within the limits established by the colonial occupier, and finally after the end of World War II nations to agree on a political settlement that included, among other things, a commitment to freedom of movement through the Universal Declaration of Human rights, inspired by the French revolution, we are now witnessing again the political management of human mobility as if it were a commodity.

In fact, universalism was born deficient, because it was born of a humanity that had deliberately amputated a significant part of itself. For when it was born, the majority of humanity was still considered inferior, or even considered not to be a part of the human community at all. The political and legal universalism that underpins today's system was born racist and remains racist.

The law developed the idea of belonging to a community and saw itself as an instrument for managing relations within the community and between communities. For the legal system of the bourgeois state, the issue of "belonging" always was, and will be, decisive. It's a question of being, or not being, a part of this. Universalism, while recognising people's humanity, divided them into often strict, political categories, for example between nationals and foreigners. And this would forever mark the limits and scope of the management of human mobility.

All policy instruments and mechanisms that emerged under these circumstances subordinated equality to other political categories that had been developed, such as the state and the nation, nationals and foreigners. Identification and separation are another consequence of this policy. Because borders, more than geographical realities, are political constructs. Both the spirit and the letter of Europe's immigration policy embody the racist ideology of "fortress Europe", which turns the persecution of immigrants into a political programme.

The nation-state takes on a central role in managing who belongs to the community and turns the control over borders and human mobility into a key issue within the geopolitical framework of market-driven globalisation, agreed and controlled by anti-democratic, economic and political interests.

The nation-state's borders and the management of these borders are caught in this tension between accepting, in theory, that freedom of movement is "universal" and assuming the power and political legitimacy to control or limit this movement, according to the economic and political interests in dispute.

## **The brute force of borders**

Borders are thus political instruments of social organisation on a national and global level, that define not only who belongs to certain spaces but which define economically and politically who has access to them, on the basis of certain characteristics and realities that result from the political choices available or in dispute.

The economic development that has brought technological and scientific progress and the consequent increase in wealth in the world, has not blurred these boundaries. Rather, in some cases, it has strengthened them.

Such scientific and technological advances are a reflection of the past and present economic and political relations between peoples. These are relations in which one part of humanity, having enslaved, colonised and exploited the rest of the world, accumulated material and scientific wealth and continues to do so, without wanting to share it. So it builds physical and symbolic walls to prevent access to those who were previously robbed.

It is from this unequal relationship that emerge the physical and symbolic boundaries between rich and poor, between those who have everything or dream of acquiring it, and those who have almost nothing and can never dream of having much more, between those who can do anything and those who can aspire to very little. Thus, countries that became rich after fleecing others, decided to close the door and keep everything that used to belong to everyone. That is the story of migration today.

And that is how walls go up on all sides against migrants who merely seek to improve their living conditions.

People migrate because they need to, because they aspire to something better than what they have, or at least equal to what people have in the countries that plundered them and continue to exploit them. And they have every right not only to aspire to a better life, but in fact to live better.

According to various NGOs, the number of dead is already more than 40,000 in recent decades. However, it seems that the real figures could be three times as many, given the circumstances mentioned above. And even if we discount the deaths by asphyxiation during deportations and interrogations in detention centres, those killed by bullets at land borders and in militarised border areas, and those deaths from suicide, hunger, thirst, cold and heat along the various routes taken. We can, in fact, estimate at about 70,000 to 80,000 the number of people drowned trying to reach Europe, which represents a significant proportion of all migrant deaths in the world.

Europe's border policy is murderous. The alternative is freedom of movement, solidarity and the right to human dignity. We have to counterpose to the ideology of containment and closure, an internationalist vision and a socialist project of society that defends all freedoms, including the right to freedom of movement and the freedom to try to build a better life in whatever country people choose - wherever that may be. This battle must be part of the political struggle to defend freedom of movement, the right to come and go, the right to choose and change your place of residence, ensuring that these rights remain among the rights that are inalienable and non-negotiable. To put an end to the deaths on Europe's borders, it is necessary to end the political geography of "fortress Europe". In so far as borders are more a political construct than a geographical reality, a socialist project will argue openly and categorically for an end to all frontiers, physical and symbolic, social and cultural, legal and political.

### **Combatting border policy as an instrument of economic subjugation**

In fact, it is since 1985 that, from summit to summit, Europe's immigration policy has begun little by little to put into practice the criminalisation of migration and the outsourcing of its borders, as foreseen by Schengen. The European Union thus consolidated the militarisation of its immigration policy through a variety of police and military measures, the most advanced of which is undoubtedly Frontex.

Unfortunately, in recent decades, the pain of departure for innumerable reasons was accompanied by countless tragedies along the routes of migration, almost always ending in deaths and disappearances. Death became the inevitable corollary of immigration.

Everywhere in Europe, along all its borders, both by sea and by land, from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, from Ceuta and Melilla to Lampedusa and the Greek-Turkish border, passing through the Turkish-Bulgarian and Hungarian-Austrian borders, from the Straights of Gibraltar to the Aegean, European immigration policy is in essence based, in addition to the criminalisation of migrants, on transferring its border controls overseas wherever it can, and a subsequent militarisation of those borders, alongside their commercialisation through bilateral trade relationships.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the number of deaths at the borders has constantly increased. The numbers are hard to verify simply because of the circumstances in which the journeys take place; but also because not only do European officials try to conceal the real tragedy from their own public opinion, but so do the transit countries. The latter are obliged to register the flow of migrants as

part of the various cooperation agreements to transfer border controls to the countries of origin, and they need to demonstrate competence in this field to avoid financial penalties in terms of bilateral cooperation.

If you add to the cost of detention facilities in third countries (€ 45.8 million), the technical assistance to nearby dictatorial regimes (€ 74.66 million), the fortifications (walls) in Spain, Greece and Bulgaria (€ 76.6 million), the equipment for border policing (€ 225.71 million), the programmes of “research and development” (€ 230 million), the “European coordination efforts” (€ 954,717,510), Frontex (€ 669.6 million ) and deportations (€11.3 billion), the overall total comes to € 12.649.368.000.

These amounts are a measure of the economic and financial stakes of border control in EU immigration policy. The hypocrisy of the discourse on development cooperation which supposedly would be decisive for fixing populations in their countries of origin through economic development policies, is clear. It is revealed by the disparity between the overall value of such development aid, which at present stands at 0.42% of EU GDP, and the more than twelve billion euros (€12.649.368.000) allocated to the EU’s border management expenses.

If we then compare the 1.8 billion euros pledged to the African continent at the last summit in Valletta between Europe and Africa, and the more than 3 billion euros promised to Turkey to deal with the “refugee crisis”, with the €11.3 billion exclusively earmarked for deportations, it becomes clear that border policy is mainly about closing down and not opening up.

Based on the concept of “circular migration” developed in the first half decade of this century, EU leaders decided at a stroke to legitimise politically two kinds of precariousness faced by migrants, in both the legal and employment areas. They thus shifted definitively the right to movement from the sphere of rights to the sphere of commercial relations.

After decades of imposing structural adjustment policies in collusion with the Bretton Woods institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, and of fomenting conflicts and wars that have impoverished the immigrants’ countries of origin and provoked the massive displacement of populations, the European Union has used economic blackmail to oblige the countries of origin and transit to assume responsibility for the process. Human mobility as a commodity has become the political norm. Like any other raw material, it has become a matter of business in the framework of capitalist relations between Europe and the migrants’ countries of origin. It becomes pivotal in how the countries of transit and origin are required to manage Europe’s external border controls in exchange for a few crumbs of the money allocated to border surveillance and the repression of those seeking to migrate.

With this policy, the EU both strengthened its internal mechanisms of repression against immigrants, while also delegating to the governments of neighbouring countries the crackdown on immigration, through agreements and programs with “third countries”.

From the Europe-Africa summit in Lisbon in 2007, the European Union accentuated this economic blackmail through the famous economic partnership agreements (EPA), using immigration policy as a neocolonial mechanism in its bilateral relations with the migrants’ countries of origin.

One of the most urgent tasks is to confront this European project of developing exclusive, racist, sexist and macho geographies, of turning human mobility into a commodity, of closing and militarising its borders, while pushing controls onto the countries of origin. We have to combat the criminalisation of migrants. It is also essential to understand that migrants are more than numbers in a sinister and macabre accounting exercise; they are political actors and the potential

protagonists of real changes in immigration policy. Therefore, it is essential to seek to build with migrants, through all the various forms of organisation possible, alternative policy responses that break with the mercantile and utilitarian logic that reduces them to mere statistics. In line with its own political agendas and interests, Europe tends to enclose itself within the limits of a distinction between political space and historical time, and to become not just a closed and exclusive space, but a real political, economic, cultural and geographic fortress against migrants.

Thus, history and the geography (social, cultural, political, etc.) of the past and the present condition hugely the perception of what is meant by the category "citizen" in Europe and who may or may not be a part of it, in a clear intention to exclude foreign nationals. Looking at immigration today forces us to deconstruct the rhetoric about the "Europe of democratic values" and, of course, invites us to denounce this and confront it ideologically. This confrontation over the situation of migrants in Europe necessarily involves deconstructing the various myths that feed the imagination and everyday reality of people's political practice and social relations. This history, always seen through Eurocentric glasses, which over time have become the prevailing view, demands a silencing and masking of a series of events related to (re)production of capitalism in the management of immigration policy. Such dominant narratives omit a whole series of practices that are deeply rooted in real and symbolic contexts of violence, exploitation, expropriation and domination.

Thus, the European border management policy is one component of capitalist domination that it exercises over the migrants' countries of origin.

### **"Working with uncertainty", to be able to confront difficulties**

The growth of nationalism, of populism and especially the extreme right, are the other face of the current crisis of the bourgeois regime and the capitalist system. The present economic and political crises encourage simplistic rhetoric and facile, Manichaeistic divisions between good and bad because, to a large extent, they constitute a crisis of alternatives and disenchantment, not only for the most vulnerable sections of society but also for what has wrongly become known as the "middle class."

To combat nationalism, populism and, more specifically, the extreme right, we have to go beyond the comfort zone of absolute doctrinal certainties and make a radical theoretical and political break! It is an arduous task. The debate is a difficult one. But reality and the challenges that it poses do not lend themselves to easy answers.

At a time when the old Europe raises its head once again through the new ideological configurations of nationalism and fascism, with a series of tragedies at the gates of Europe and within it - a reflection of the politics of death into which the political strategy of "Fortress Europe" and its attendant paranoia over security have turned immigration policy - it is urgent to refocus the debate on migration as such, and put it where it should be located: on an uncompromising struggle for freedom and equality, and against the populist national-fascism that is on the rise in Europe, against rising xenophobia and racism, and against all borders.

The security paranoia and war fever are present in all areas of the language and political strategy used for managing migration flows. Just look at the quantity of belligerent expressions to be found in the political discourse and the legal and administrative rules on immigrants and refugees. You will easily come across phrases like: "war on terrorism", "combating illegal immigration", "fighting organised crime", "the fight against mafias", "enhanced land and sea surveillance", "beefing up the control of airspace to ensure security and the maintenance of public order", "training police forces to confront the new threats from illegal immigration and terrorism and therefore the need for closer

police and strategic cooperation”, “the need to introduction biometric systems to improve the detection and prevention of organised crime linked to the increase in migration that fuels organised crime and transnational terrorism”, etc. From political rhetoric to legal and administrative jargon, everything serves to promote a narrative of fear about immigration and against immigrants, in order to justify their repression and legitimise the emergency laws that stigmatise and discriminate against them.

## **Respond to the advance of xenophobia in Europe**

As we have seen in recent times with the general rise of the extreme right, the fact that the mainstream parties have built a negative consensus on the agenda of diversity and difference, is no longer enough to eclipse the extreme right which is gaining social and political strength, with a growing social base and increasing political legitimacy. That is why, yesterday and today, as opposed to reactionary nationalism, the urgent demand for citizenship based on residence means we have to fight intransigently for an end to borders, for the right of immigrants to vote, and against racism.

There is a proliferation of laws which, on the pretext of defending secularism or the western social and cultural model - supposedly more advanced, but now threatened by the presence of immigrant communities and their cultural practices - are part of a racist ideological doctrine of cultural supremacy which is objectively directed against “non-Europeans”, even though many of them were born in Europe.

For decades, thousands upon thousands of citizens have been beating on Europe’s door, where there are already more than 20 million foreign citizens to whom Europe, as an idea and a political project, refuses the right of belonging and any possibility of identifying with it. More than twenty million people who live in Europe are excluded from the political community and relegated to the category of “third country nationals”. The “Europeans” have so far coexisted relatively comfortably and naturally with the idea that these more than twenty million people are a strange part of their society and body politic. In reality what this shows is that there is an undisguised racism behind the political orientation of Europe and its overcharged production of emergency laws which only express a desire to politically consolidate and socially legitimise the category of “non-European”.

If we remember the urban riots in London in 1981 and 2011 and Paris in 2005, the frequent deportations of Romanian Roma from Italy and France, which still continue to some extent throughout Europe, if we also look at the evictions and demolition of homes in social neighbourhoods and nomadic camps in many parts of Europe; if we recall the 20 years since the racist attacks of Rostock (Germany) in August 1992, the 16 years since El Ejido (Spanish State) in February 2000 and then in Rosarno (Italy) in January 2010, we can see that what is currently happening throughout Europe is not a strange or isolated phenomenon.

71 years after the prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp were liberated by Soviet soldiers, we see that the political far-right is alive and well in most of Europe. This Europe that defeated militarily and morally Nazism, never overcame politically and ideologically racism. It is this Europe that awoke from the Nazi nightmare and was freed with the invaluable help of the forefathers (African, Asian, North African, etc.) of precisely those migrants and refugees that today it seeks to banish.

In the week that marked the military and moral defeat of Nazism, it is not just its ghost but Nazism itself that hovers over Europe: borders turned into open-air cemeteries with tens of thousands of dead, refugees forced to use shiny, personal identification bracelets in Wales, the likely approval of confiscating refugees’ jewellery in many European countries, already approved in Denmark, the



inclusion of the loss of French nationality and a state of emergency in the French constitution, immigrants branded with stamps as they are screened on the eastern borders, just like in the times of slavery and Nazism, especially in Hungary, Bulgaria and Macedonia, far-right militias attacking foreigners, states of judicial exception that reduce migrants to numbers and deny them their humanity. It is therefore the celebration of a past that refuses to pass away and is only too present in the everyday life of tens of thousands of foreign citizens in Europe.

In fact, the inclusion of the state of emergency and the loss nationality into the constitution in France, the legalisation of the confiscation of jewellery, property and other valuables from refugees in Denmark and possibly in other European countries, and all the Islamophobic rhetoric of the political debate, are in fact a drift in Europe towards a disturbing and accelerated process of fascism.

The unleashing of hatred and violence against immigrants and ethnic minorities is the natural result of policies inscribed in a return to nationalism, feeding on the racist idea of national and, by extension, European preference. Memory as an instrument of political legitimation has been the political and legislative rhetorical basis for reintroducing a set of laws whose main purpose, apart from consolidating socio-racial categorisations, is to legitimise racism - as in the times of colonisation, slavery, indigenous subordination, the Holocaust and Apartheid, among others. Fallaciously, the defence of civilised modernity against the barbarism and cultural backwardness of immigrant communities, and of public spaces against religious proselytising, has served, throughout Europe, as an argument for the creation of such emergency laws, whether in relation to immigration, or in relation to the veil and memory. All the hysteria around a certain Jacobin fundamentalism that poisoned the political debate on diversity in France is symptomatic of this.

In fact, all the emergency laws that have emerged in recent times, whether on the grounds of defending law and order, or under the guise of defending secularism or the current cultural model, are a clear manifestation of the use of racism as an ideological tool. The history of slavery, colonialism and Nazism in Europe hangs over this policy, which sees difference as a justification for closure, in line with the ideological heritage of racial supremacy.

This Europe, whose immigration policy and management of diversity oscillates between the ideology of war and emergency laws, invented Frontex (the most powerful and sophisticated military-police system since World War II), exclusively to hunt people just because they are different and do not belong to the geographical and political space of Europe - immigrants. The semantics and practice of the ideology of war in relation to immigration policies and the political legitimacy of Islamophobia, the Roma-phobia and Black-phobia - i.e. racism - through countless exceptional laws are some of the borders of European geographies that we have to stand up against. Because these imposed barriers, physical and symbolic, have served largely to reinforce the construction of boundaries between a certain "we" and the "others."

### **Pave the way for a policy of emancipation and free circulation**

In effect, since 14 June, 1985, with the Schengen Agreement, through 15 June, 1990, with the Dublin agreements, 7 February, 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty, 2 October, 1997, with the Amsterdam Treaty, 26 February, 2001, with the Nice Treaty and 13 December, 2007, with the Treaty of Lisbon, Europe has been moving towards a schizophrenic political logic of closing its borders to difference, in complete contradiction with the sociological reality of its own ethnic composition, which is undeniably and irrevocably diverse. That is, since the Schengen Agreement in 1985 to the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, EU leaders have been unable to force a political change to alter this state of affairs

and lead Europe not only to accept diversity and difference, but to incorporate them and, above all, respect them. This would culminate, for example, among others, in June 2008, in the adoption of the Return Directive, better known by the Directive of Shame, more like the Gestapo raids. It was a sad sequel that legitimised the infamous Sarkozy Pact on immigration and asylum, in September / October of the same year. From then on, there was no stopping it. Europe exceeded all limits in the production of policies conducive to institutional discrimination and persecution against migrants.

The “respectable” right and social democracy capitulated to the extreme right, turning ethnic minorities into scapegoats for the crisis. The right joined the extreme right in persecuting ethnic minorities while social democracy, on the pretext of fighting it, dusted off its racist and xenophobic rhetoric, thus giving credibility and social and political legitimacy to racism. Given these circumstances, the first responsibility of the left is to wage a relentless fight against fascism and racism, taking this fight into all the struggles and mobilisations much more vigorously than it has done so far.

Faced with this situation, the IC decides at its meeting of 21 February, 2016, to undertake actions and mobilisations whose political orientation includes a political struggle to:

- a) Denounce the causes of forced and massive displacement of populations by promoting mobilisations and street actions against imperialism and war;
- b) Promote and participate in all demonstrations of solidarity and for the development of political alternatives against restrictive immigration policies;
- c) Demand more funding for the reception of migrants and less for repression, especially the militarisation of border controls;
- d) Demand an end to all mechanisms for persecuting immigrants, in particular systems like SIS, CRATE, Rabbit, FAST TRACK, ICONet, VIS, EURODAC and EUROSUR;
- e) Demand the repeal of Dublin III and a review of the Geneva Convention to make it more suitable to the present times and circumstances;
- f) Argue for the end of Frontex and its conversion into a rescue and humanitarian intervention force;
- g) Argue for the opening of special corridors and the granting of special entry visas for refugees who are stuck in hotspots on the borders and in transit countries;
- h) Advocate the creation of mechanisms of bilateral cooperation between member states to overcome the EU’s institutional blocks in the management of migratory flows;
- i) Demand the regularisation of all the undocumented and repeal the Family Reunification Directive;
- j) Integrate the fight against racism and fascism into all political actions;
- k) Make the political, ideological and cultural struggle against the extreme right a central priority. Confront the rise of the extreme right through an agenda of counter-cultural hegemony against conservatism and through intercultural interventions that seek to retake the public space through combined initiatives and mobilisations with the victims of racism;
- l) Fighting for voting rights of immigrants in all elections to make citizenship a reality, because democracy will only be complete when all men and women participate in it and are represented;

m) Fight for nationality to be based solely on place of birth, abolishing the right of blood as a means of acquiring nationality;

n) Demand an end to the deportations and the closure of detention centres in Europe and its periphery, in the name of respect for the human rights and human dignity of those who are detained only because of their immigration status;

o) Fight for repeal of the Directives on Return and Family Reunification, and for changes to the Labour and "race" directives;

p) Contribute through debate and critical thinking to challenge society in general, and academia in particular, to "decolonize" the production of knowledge and expertise, in particular through post-colonial "decolonial" studies, and above all, to further study and reflection on the semantic forms of racism, especially Roma-phobia, Afrophobia and Islamophobia;

q) Demand reforms to the school curricula and textbooks, so as to reflect and value cultural diversity, and promote interculturalism and its various contributions in school and academic subjects;

r) Finally, mobilise in favour of bilingual education as one of the instruments, not only of linguistic and cultural preservation, but also as a tool for interaction and the socialisation of differences within school communities.

Revolutionary socialism sees an urgent need for radical anti-racism that respects difference in the fight against fascism in all its forms of expression, and which remains uncompromisingly engaged in the struggle for radical democracy where the equality of all has to be a reality.

**Mamadou Ba**, Lisbon, 10 February 2016

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## **P.S.**

\* "Migration : break the cycle of death, restore dignity and defend freedom of movement".

Translation IVP:

<http://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article4421>

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## **Footnotes**

[1] ESSF (article 37396), [Statement on displaced people and asylum seekers: Internationalism from below against Fortress Europe](#).