

Abolish Frontex, end the EU border regime - “The policies of Fortress Europe have killed over 40,555 people since 1993”

Saturday 12 June 2021, by [#AbolishFrontex](#) (Date first published: 9 June 2021).

To: EU member states governments, the European Commission, European Council, Council of the EU, European Parliament and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)

Over 740 people have died so far this year trying to cross the Mediterranean, looking for a place of safety. The EU's border regime forced them to take dangerous migration routes, often on unseaworthy vessels; it enlisted neighbouring countries to stop them on their way; met them with violence and pushbacks; or refused to rescue them – abandoning them to drown at sea.

These are lives lost because of the European Union's obsession with reinforcing borders instead of protecting people. At what cost? The policies of Fortress Europe have killed over 40,555 people since 1993. Left to die in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the desert, shot at borders, died by suicide at detention centres, tortured and killed after being deported — The EU has blood on its hands.

At the centre of this violence lies the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex – the EU's border police force. For its 15 years of existence, Frontex has been both avid promoter and key enforcer of Europe's violent policies against people on the move. Often hiding away from public scrutiny, over the past months a series of investigations by journalists and human rights groups have put Frontex in the spotlight. Extensive evidence has exposed how the EU's border force is repeatedly involved in illegal pushbacks and human rights violations.

These revelations are not unfortunate coincidences, misunderstandings or isolated incidents. They are the tip of the iceberg, and the inherent result of the EU's militarised border regime. Every death at the border and instance of violence is a policy of the EU's own making – by choice and by design.

Frontex has now secured a €5.6 billion budget until 2027 and, by then, will have its own army of 10,000 armed border guards; it will also have more powers than ever in coordinating EU-wide deportations. Meanwhile, Europe has now built over 1,000 kilometres of border walls and fences. The EU's militarised borders are sustained by intense and invasive surveillance and connected by databases full of personal – biometric – information. To stop people from even reaching European soil, third countries are put under heavy pressure to act as outpost border guards.

These policies are built on a narrative that frames migration as a security problem, depicting desperate people on the move as a threat. They've been designed in close collaboration with the military and security industry, who is making billions of euros in profits as a result.

These policies don't protect lives. They put them in danger. They fuel the rise of the far right across Europe, they reinforce racism, and build on centuries of colonialism, oppression and exploitation.

At the same time, the European Union keeps contributing to the root causes of migration — from arms exports to the extraction of resources and its responsibility for the climate crisis.

Fortress Europe fills us with shame, suppresses rights and prevents justice. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Today, activists and organizations from in- and outside the EU are coming together with a single demand: Abolish Frontex and the system it spearheads.

We don't want to see more lives lost at sea or in the desert; lives wasted in detention or in inhumane refugee camps. We oppose a world increasingly divided by fortified borders to protect the wealth of the rich from the desperation and righteous anger of the poor and oppressed.

We believe in freedom of movement for all; in providing support and shelter for people on the move, and in working towards a world where people are no longer forced to flee their homes and can live where they choose to.

In this context, Frontex cannot be reformed. It must be abolished. As the signatories of this letter, we pledge our commitment to this goal. There are no excuses, investigations or halfhearted reform procedures that should ever justify Frontex' existence.

We demand that the structures and policies that cause violence and death be dismantled. Instead, we must build a system that guarantees justice and safety for all. We demand that you abolish Frontex and end the EU border regime it represents.

(InExile)

Agir Pour la Paix

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Alternativa Antimilitarista.MOC

Anarchistische Anti-deportatie Groep Utrecht (AAGU)

BAAM (Le Bureau d'accueil et d'accompagnement des migrants)

Balkanbrücke

Baobab Experience

Enough Kollektiv

Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice

FragDenStaat

front-LEX

Getting the Voice Out

Iuventa10

LeaveNoOneBehind

Mare Liberum

Medibüro Berlin

Mediterranea

MiGreat

Migrant Solidarity Network

New Profile

No Borders Rheinland

No More Morias

Push Back Alarm Austria

Red canaria por los derechos de las personas migrantes

Refugees' Solidarity Movement in Alexandria & Cairo

Resqship

Seebrücke Rheinland Pfalz

Seebrücke Wien

Sea-Watch

Stop Deportations Vienna

Stop Fuelling War (Cessez d'alimenter la Guerre)

Stop the War on Migrants

Transnational Institute

ÜberGrenzenKollektiv

Vicdani Ret Derneği (Association for Conscientious Objection)

Vredesactie

Watch The Med Alarm Phone

We'll Come United

P.S.

- <https://abolishfrontex.org/blog/2021/06/09/abolish-frontex-open-letter/>