

#LEAVENOONEBEHIND – EVACUATE GREEK CAMPS NOW! **#UNTEILBAR, 03/26/2020**

The situation in the European hotspots on the Greek islands has been tense for a while. In view of the global Covid-19 pandemic, the European austerity policy, and the ailing health care system in Greece, along with the first confirmed Covid-19 infections on the island of Lesbos, a humanitarian disaster is looming in the camps on the Aegean islands [1]. The people living there have no way of implementing the protection requirements of the WHO. In the completely overcrowded camps is hardly any clean water for washing hands, so-called social distancing as well as quarantine measures cannot be implemented, health centers are overcrowded and tests for the coronavirus are not available. Camps like in Moria are threatening to become a death trap for many thousands of people seeking protection. People must be evacuated from the camps immediately!

The situation at the European external borders has worsened in recent weeks and requires immediate measures. People seeking protection live in catastrophic conditions in European hotspots, such as the camps on the Aegean islands of Chios, Kos, Leros, Lesbos or Samos. The camps, especially the Moria camp in Lesbos, are hopelessly overcrowded. The camp in Moria, which has been set up for 3,000 people, currently holds around 20,000 people. At the same time, the Greek government suspends the right to asylum, violates the non-refoulement ban [2], pushes refugees back to Turkey without the option for registering and applying for asylum, detains refugees in secret illegal detention centers [3] and uses military forces against refugees at the Greek-Turkish border area at Evros. According to current knowledge, at least two people, Muhammad al-Arab and Muhammad Gulzar, have been killed [4]. In the Aegean Sea, many people who seek protection are aggressively attacked by the Greek coast guard, boat engines are getting destroyed and inflatable boats slashed. What we are currently experiencing contradicts all rules and requirements of the European Union, the Geneva Refugee Convention and universal human rights.

“The credibility of Europe is getting severely damaged. The moral foundation of the continental constitutional state, as envisaged by the founders in the 1957 EU agreements, this continental European constitutional state commits suicide. This is an absolutely decisive tragic moment in the history of Europe.” (Jean Ziegler: “Europe commits suicide”)

In addition, international organizations, supporters and journalists are attacked by fascists, intimidated and forced to stop their work. Arson attacks were carried out on the camp in Moria, people seeking protection were harassed when they arrived in Lesbos and pressured to turn back.

If the right to asylum is suspended, if people who seek protection are getting shot with stun grenades, rubber bullets and even live ammunition, if they get imprisoned illegally, sentenced in fast-track illegal procedures or illegally pushed back, then universal human rights are invalidated.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner EU knowingly ignores fundamental and human rights. The refugees are deprived of basic rights and opportunities to defend themselves legally.

The effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the humanitarian situation in the Greek camps reveal social differences with all severity: who has the privilege of maintaining hygienic standards? Who has access to adequate health and emergency care? Who can keep distance from others or go into quarantine?

Certainly not the illegalized and paperless people in collective accommodation -- only citizens can count on the protection of a constitutional state. This separation of human and civil rights must end under all circumstances. In open and democratic societies such a distinction must not

exist. The EU, an association of European constitutional states, must guarantee the protection of all people living in it. In order to prevent this imminent catastrophe, the camps must be evacuated immediately.

#LEAVENOONEBEHIND - IS THE URGENT NEED OF THE HOUR AND ACTION MUST BE TAKEN AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!

- [1] <https://www.deutschlandfunknova.de/beitrag/covid-19-lesbos-coronavirus-gefahr-in-lagern-fuer-gefluechtete>
- [2] <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/10/world/europe/greece-migrants-secret-site.html>
- [3] <https://verfassungsblog.de/die-herrschaft-des-rechts-an-der-eu-aussengrenze/>
- [4] <https://vimeo.com/395567226> und <https://taz.de/Gefluechtete-an-der-EU-Aussengrenze/!5667063/>



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