

July 13, 2017

Shout out! Solidarity with refugees and rescuers

The situation in the Mediterranean Sea and Libya has become even more brutal. Sea rescue conditions are becoming increasingly difficult. The EU contributes to this escalation.

Currently, refugees in distress at sea are mostly being rescued by NGOs. In contrast to this, the so-called Libyan coastguard, supported by the EU, is operating more and more rigorously against refugees and rescuers. Libyan units, an obscure network of security forces, militias and human traffickers, are shooting at lifeboats and interfering with the work of the NGOs in the Mediterranean Sea. In Libya, humans are being abducted, tortured and raped. This is happening in the official detention centers, too. It is unbearable, that the EU and Germany support these violations of human rights logistically, financially and with weapons.

Aside from the current endangerment through Libyan units, the cooperation with European security forces at sea has worsened. Promised forces, even in close proximity, sometime leave the NGOs alone even in case of emergency.

Rescuers are working at the limits of their capabilities in order to provide survival support nevertheless. Reactions of the EU and various member states are intolerable: Instead of increasingly supporting the NGOs, they are criminalizing them with false accusations. Regardless of the fact that rescue in case of distress is an obligation according to German, European and international law.

Italy is threatening to close its ports for ships of the NGOs and thereby refugees, if other EU member states refuse to demonstrate more solidarity. However, this would be a blatant breach of law and is thus unlikely. Italy has been accommodating refugees for decades, while countries like Germany have appealed to the Dublin Regulation. At present Italy is steering towards a state of emergency, where many migrants remain without shelter.

It is time to end the blocking of the Italian borders. The numbers of refugees coming to Europe are currently, likewise already for decades, relatively low compared to countries such as Jordan, Turkey or Uganda.

Shout out! We demand:

Ceasing cooperation of the EU with Libyan units

No push-backs to Libya

Support of the NGOs on the Mediterranean Sea and rescue by European forces

Solidarity with refugees, suspension of the Dublin Regulation and reopening of the Italian borders

Safe, legal passage to Europe

A Europe of open borders