

International Solidarity with the world's migrant and refugee peoples

The migrant, refugee and citizens' organizations and groups that signed this Manifesto reiterate our solidarity with the migrants and refugees of the world and we commit ourselves to continue defending the rights and freedoms that are frequently denied to migrant and refugee peoples.

The UN General Assembly decided in 2000 to proclaim December 18 International Migrants Day, given "the need to continue trying to ensure respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants." Almost two decades after that proclamation, we find that these objectives are far from being achieved and that in the richest countries, physical and legal walls are still being erected to prevent people from very different backgrounds from exercising their right to migrate or return to their countries.

It is now one year since the 2018 approval of the "Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration" of the UN and we note that in addition to not being compulsory for States, it only contains control, identification and regulation measures, together with statements of intentions without content, serving to whitewash migratory policies and prioritise the interests of capital and the market over the rights of migrant and refugee peoples.

In April of 2019, the Permanent Peoples Tribunal (PPT) in Brussels identified as "crimes against humanity and system crimes" the systematic violations presented in evidence at the Hearings of its 45th Session – held in Barcelona, Palermo, Paris, London and Brussels during 2017-2019.

The PPT identified that the European Union has a grave responsibility in generating a situation throughout Europe that is a "hostile environment" where systematic violations of the rights of migrants and refugees are taking place. The magnitude of what is undoubtedly a serious crisis of human values and political failure is reflected in the following figures: since 2014, approximately 20,000 migrants, women, men, elderly, and children, have drowned trying to cross the Mediterranean.

The EU chose in 2016 to sell the rights of migrants to Turkey. The Ankara-EU agreement, to curb migration from Turkey's coasts to Greece, has led 3.5 million migrants to be stranded today in Turkish territory, in exchange for the payment of billions of euros granted by Brussels to the authoritarian government of Erdogan. That shameful 'Deal' allows Erdogan to regularly blackmail his European partners and threaten to 'forward' those migrants to the EU; or as it happened recently, to develop the war against the Kurdish population, using those same migrants as a currency of their warlike ambitions.

The Greek government agreed to use the Greek islands as "holding areas", where about 35.000 migrants and refugees are "trapped" in inhumane conditions, in unsanitary camps, which have turned into a "struggle for survival", and a humanitarian emergency.

The Memorandum Italy-Libya signed in February 2017, and recently automatically renewed, for the purpose of blocking at sea and returning the largest possible number of migrants to Libya, has led to the creation of a Libyan search and rescue (SAR).

Serious violations of human rights documented in reports and testimonies continue to take place throughout the migratory route - from the country of origin, to the countries of destination and permanence: at the external, internal borders of Europe and in the territory of the member countries. These policies, illegal and illegitimate that are manifested especially in border areas, represent in the judgement of the PPT an unacceptable injustice, which results in crimes against humanity. The EU and the Member States have been held directly and indirectly responsible for these 'system crimes' - of torture, mistreatment, for not respecting the obligations to save lives at sea, the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and the principle of no refoulement.

Migration is a human right. But on many occasions it is also the product of forced displacement - by wars, ideological, ethnic, sexual or religious persecutions; or as a result of the practices of transnational corporations that, together with the governments of different countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia, expel local populations to misappropriate their resources. In this case, the exercise of the right to migrate and cross the borders imposed by capital becomes an act of resistance for individual and collective survival, as well as denouncing the global necropolitics that deprives people of their resources, makes business with repression and genocide at the borders and exploits migrants taking advantage of discrimination and vulnerability imposed by migratory laws.

Governments such as the United States are obstinate in promoting a racist, xenophobic discourse against migrants, in violation of international laws. As a result of this policy, there has been the separation and forced detention of thousands of children from their parents, who in countless cases have been expelled to Mexico and Central American countries. Between October 2018 and the same month of this year, about 1 million detainees were registered at the U.S. border. At the same time kidnappings and extreme violence against migrants have increased on the southern border of Mexico.

More than 1 million Myanmar nationals, known as Rohingya, have been forced to migrate to Bangladesh. Unfortunately, the response of the global communities to this crisis for which Bangladesh took responsibility has been very inadequate in terms of emergency support and in putting pressure on the Myanmar government to ensure safe repatriation with dignity.

We are concerned that climate induced internal migration is still not getting proper attention. It is estimated that by 2050, 140 million people across the world will be forced to migrate internally. Rich countries and their corporations are historically responsible for the climate change and thus they should take responsibility in regard to the climate induced migrants.

We are concerned and denounce the use of the rightist rhetoric of the new European Commission, which seeks to integrate the 'Protection of our European way of life' portfolio in the same position with the issue of migration. Policies against migrants and refugees developed by various governments based on xenophobic and racist arguments promote and facilitate ultra-right forces to continue to expand throughout the EU.

In the face of the policy of governments that deny the rights of migrant and refugee peoples, in many countries, cities, towns, initiatives of support and solidarity are raised with those who have chosen to emigrate. The Permanent Peoples Tribunal 45th Session (Barcelona, Palermo, Paris, London, Brussels), the General States of Migration in France, citizen disobedience and solidarity initiatives in Spain, Greece, Italy and elsewhere in Europe as well the solidarity in United States, Bangladesh and Mexico are some examples that must be grown and reinforced.

There is no "crisis of migrants". It is a crisis of the capitalist system and state policies that distort a reality that is part of the history of humankind – the right to migrate!

Signatures: <https://ppt.transnationalmigrantplatform.net/list-organisations-sign-on/>