

**Press release**  
**9 December 2008**

## Human Rights Day

**Appeal to the European Parliament "Stop the death trap at the European Borders!"  
More than 1500 documented cases of deaths at the doors of Europe over the last 12 months illustrate a serious human rights record.**

On the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, PRO ASYL is presenting a petition to the European Parliament which is addressing the most urgent and saddest chapter of the European asylum and migration policy: the dying of thousands at our outer borders. More than 1500 documented cases of deaths at the doors of Europe over the last 12 months illustrate a serious human rights record.

The European border regime violates the right to life, the right to seek asylum and human dignity on a daily basis. Boats carrying refugees are pursued and driven away in international waters and territorial waters of countries of origin and transit alike. The increased defence at the borders forces persons to take longer and more dangerous flight routes and results in increased mortality rates at the borders.

Nearly 30.000 citizens, predominantly from Germany, and human rights organisation from 17 European countries are supporting the petition and are appealing to the European Parliament not to acquiesce in the creation and tolerance of 'human rights free zones' at the borders of the EU. PRO ASYL believes that respect for the 1951 Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights at the European border and at sea is vital in order to put an end to the dying of thousands.

Actions by the European border agency FRONTEX, which violate human rights, must be stopped. Those seeking protection have the right to be brought into a safe European harbour and have their claims for protection assessed in a fair asylum determination procedure. The European Parliament controls the budget and is called upon to make full use of its influence to control FRONTEX.

Karl Kopp

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Attachment: Petition to the European Parliament