

EMERGENCY CALL OF ACTION FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITHOUT PAPERS IN PATRAS GREECE

THIS WEDNESDAY (30<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY) THEIR SELF MADE SHELTER FACILITIES/HUTS WILL BE DEMOLISHED, PEOPLE ARE ALREADY ARRESTED AND ABDUCTED BY UNDERCOVER POLICE, (PLEASE SENT A PROTEST LETTER/E-MAIL THAT YOU WILL FIND AT THE END OF THIS LETTER)



Where they live....

On the south east side of Europe, at Patras, the first European port to the west, hundreds of young men, some as young as 10 year old have only one wish: they dream of a sea passage taking them over to western Europe. These young men are fleeing their homeland, Afghanistan, a homeland that for the last 28 years is at war. They are trying to escape the war, poverty and authoritarian political regimes. They are looking for better living conditions. After weeks and months of risky journeys they reach Patras. For the last 12 years the refugees that keep coming have faced all at the same time institutional violence, indifference and some times merely tolerance of their existence. The port police have been violent but refugees could “live” at a self made, almost like paper shelter facilities up until they could find a way to go west. The present conditions of the self made “almost like paper” camp are horrible: there are no sanitary facilities, lack of drinking water and no provision of garbage collection. People are hungry and terrified.

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In the last week though the refugees have faced a coordinated effort from the police, the central and the local government to move them away from the port. Demolition of their self made shelter facilities has started, forced detentions, abductions and arrests by undercover police are daily phenomena which have imposed a regime of terror.



The police have given them few days to gather their things. This coming Wednesday the demolition will be completed. People are telling us that they prefer to die than to live under the regime of terror and insecurity. Children have disappeared from the shelter while their relatives from Afghanistan are looking at them frantically. Activists and local people have been trying to help anyway they can but with no available infrastructure this has been extremely hard.

What happens in Patras is part of the same paradoxical situation that has been arisen all over European Union: while the rich countries of European Union become more and more cooperative and move closer to each other, the practical possibility of getting there becomes more and more limited for a large section of the population coming from the third countries. The European Union instead of reacting to increasing emigration efforts with a coherent policy to reflect a belief that each country of the world has control over its resources to take care the needs of its people, the European states are meeting the challenge, above all, by strengthening their borders. Greece has also been affected by the increasing 'harmonization' in European refugee and migration policies, which are shifting 'fencing-in' measures and repression to the centre of attention. Whereas the Greek government has recently shown itself determined to keep refugees/immigrants without papers away from its ports (Patras and Igoymenitsa) that are gates to the west, by all possible means. Police, demolitions, detentions, arrests and abductions can not keep the people wanting to leave their war and poverty torn countries.

We demand humane living conditions for all the refugees and immigrants. We demand freedom of movement of all people. Freedom of movement of all people encompasses different struggles of migration taking place every day throughout Europe : struggles for housing and legalization, struggles against racism and camps, struggles on the workplace, the struggles of women for liberation.

**The initiative for the support of the rights of immigrants and refugees in the city of Patras.**

For more information please contact us at:  
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EMERGENCY CALL OF ACTION-PLEASE SENT TODAY THE FOLLOWING LETTER/E-MAIL

We invite all people, groups, networks and social movements in Europe and all over the world to join us on our struggles to protect the human rights of all people. We call you to sent an e-mail and or a fax to the president of the Greek Parliament, to the mayor of Patras and to the Governor of the prefecture that the city of Patras belong demanding the protection of the human rights of all people. Sent the mail to all three and to us cc: [dimgsioufas@parliament.gr](mailto:dimgsioufas@parliament.gr), [tps@achaia.gr](mailto:tps@achaia.gr), [mayor@patras.gr](mailto:mayor@patras.gr), [antiracistpatras@yahoo.gr](mailto:antiracistpatras@yahoo.gr). If you can fax them too it will be great.

Their mails are:

name	email	Phone	fax
Mr Sioufas, president of the Greek Parliament	<a href="mailto:dimgsioufas@parliament.gr">dimgsioufas@parliament.gr</a>	0030+ 210 - 3614562	0030+24410 - 25551
Mr Katsikopoulos governor	<a href="mailto:tps@achaia.gr">tps@achaia.gr</a>	0030+2613 613 301 / 302	0030+2610 273 581
Mr Fouras , mayor	<a href="mailto:mayor@patras.gr">mayor@patras.gr</a>	0030+2610- 966380/966200	0030+2610-623562

A sample letter/e-mail follows:

Dear President of the Greek Parliament: Mr Sioufas

Dear Mayor of Patras: Mr Fouras

Dear Governor of Achaia: Mr Katsikopoulos

We are/ I am concerned about the pogrom against the refugees that are living in Patras. The demolition of their self made camp that started in Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2008, the forced detentions, arrests and abductions, have imposed a regime of terror on refugees making them all the more vulnerable to the human traffickers and exploiters. Among the 800 Afghani people, there are approximately 300 children, some as young as 10 year old. Some of the children have been lost whereas their families in Afghanistan are looking for them frantically. The local government in the past had promised humane living conditions for the refugees but we no avail. We ask the Greek Parliament and the local government to:

- Stop arrests and abductions. Legalize all immigrants and refugees
  
- Protect refugees who enter Greek territory.
- Stop detention of asylum seekers.
- Set-up reception infrastructure integrated to society.
- Grant asylum to refugees

We, also, demand the local government to implement their past decisions for protecting the human rights of refugees. Additionally, we demand equality for refugees and immigrants, which can be achieved through:

Free movement in EU on an equal basis with EU-citizens with the right to work and social benefits etc.

The right to permanent working and resident permits to everyone who lives in the EU.

The right to family reunification without discriminatory conditions and the right to family visits on tourist visa.

Full legal rights, social and political rights, such as medical care and education.

We/I believe that ancient Greece that has been known as the cradle of western civilization should take a lead on respecting the human rights of all people. We/I believe that modern Greece as the country of origin of many immigrants and refugees itself should pay tribute to its history by treating everyone with respect and take the lead to change repressive policies. Police, demolitions, detentions, and abductions can not keep the people wanting to leave their war and poverty torn countries. Please, take the lead to implement a European coherent policy, reflecting the belief that each country has control over its resources in order to be able to take care the needs of its people instead of strengthening European Union borders.

Please, on the name of your democratic past and your history of immigration take action and respect the rights of all people. A democratic society is judged on how it treats its more vulnerable people, ie refugees, people without papers and kids.

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
E-mail	
Organization	

