



Migrant rights are not for sale!

Brussels, 18 December 2015: International Migrants Day

8.6 billion euros! This is the sum the European Union has committed to spending to keep migrants as far as possible from its borders.

5 billion euros so that 4.4 million Syrians – whose need for international protection cannot be denied – remain in Turkey, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, instead of being welcomed in Europe.

3.6 billion euros so that Africans, from Eritrea, Sudan, Nigeria, Niger and others; Kosovars; Afghans and Turks encounter obstacles blocking their path to Europe, holding them in detention and even sending them back to the countries from where they fled violence. So that third, or “partner” countries turn them back, deport them and sometimes even arrest migrants that the European Union does not want to allow inside its borders.

8.6 billion euros so that the EU can keep its hands clean, sparing European feelings from seeing migrants die before arriving on their shores.

18 months! This is the duration of “preventive detention” that the president of the European Council, Donald Tusk, deems legitimate for those migrants who boldly dared to cross deserts, mountains and seas to seek a new future in Europe. For those whom Donald Tusk believes have no need of international protection, he reserves the humiliation, waiting and psychological violence of border detention.

7 countries considered “safe” (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) whose citizens are suspected of taking advantage of the European asylum system and its generosity.

0.33%. This percentage would represent the number of foreigners in proportion to the total population of the EU, if all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were simply accepted by member states*. Would this not be a better way to spend 8.6 billion euros?

Today, 18 December 2015, on the 25th anniversary of the International Migrants Day established by the United Nations, the AEDH and its 32 member organisations call on the European Union and its member states:

- **to stop considering the “migrant crisis” as an attack on their integrity**
- **to open secure access routes to European territory by suppressing the short-term visas required for many nationals of third countries**
- **to act as defenders of the rights of migrants and refugees by applying the Charter of Fundamental Rights that our countries themselves created, and not as devastators of hope**

* Based on an extremely high estimate of 2 million newcomers. , according to the International Organization for Migration (<http://migration.iom.int/europe/> consulted 13 December 2015).

Migrant rights, freedom and lives are not for sale!

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The European Association for the Defense of Human Rights (AEDH) brings together the leagues and associations for the protection of human rights in the countries of the European Union. For more information, visit our website <http://www.aedh.eu/?lang=en>.