

UN Security Council Authorizes EU Naval Forces to Attack Vessels Transporting Refugees in the Mediterranean

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Militarization of the waterways between Europe and the oppressed nations cannot halt migrations

A further militarization in the Mediterranean has been approved through a resolution within the United Nations Security Council passed on October 9. Millions of people have been dislocated throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia which has created the worse refugee crisis since the conclusion of World War II.

A vote by the Security Council of 14 to 1 empowers European Union (EU) Naval forces to purportedly halt and turn back vessels that are transporting migrants across the Mediterranean into Southern Europe. Only the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela abstained in the decision.

This renewed effort is called "Operation Sophia" consisting of six naval war ships from the EU in constant patrols off the coast of Libya. These vessels have been given the ability to halt, seize, detain and destroy boats utilized by human traffickers bringing thousands to Europe every week.

A statement issued by the EU operations said "Assets will conduct boarding, search, seizure and diversion, on the high seas, of vessels suspected of being used for human smuggling or trafficking." One Italian aircraft carrier, a French frigate and another from Britain, along with a Spanish ship and two German ones will be spearheading the mission, which follows in the same pattern as the EU anti-piracy expeditions off the Horn of Africa.

France 24 news agency said of the current situation that "At least three other vessels supplied by the Belgian, British and Slovenian navies are expected to arrive in the area at the end of October to complete the force, which also includes four aircraft and 1,318 personnel. But the operation is a drop in the ocean compared to the huge scale of a problem that has seen 630,000 migrants illegally enter the EU this year as people flee conflict in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq." (Oct. 7)

Imperialists Seek to Maintain Unity Amid Crisis

The migrant crisis has deeply divided the EU member-states prompting the leaders of France and Germany to issue a joint statement calling for unity within the imperialist-led bloc of states.

Other countries such as Hungary have erected fences to keep migrants out of their territory while abusing those who have entered through the use of detention centers, the beating and gassing of seniors, men, women and children.

European states were hit hard by the world capitalist crisis of 2007-2009, increasing the high rates of unemployment and poverty even in relatively wealthier countries such as France, Germany and Britain. Racial tensions between oppressed communities in these European states and their governments have intensified over the last decade.

Nonetheless, the leading economies in Europe recognize that if they do not present a more liberal posture towards the international community that it would prove even more difficult to assert their right to maintain their military presence in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. At the same time with the existing position of Germany and France in framing the migrant and refugee crisis as a “humanitarian mission”, which although claiming to assist people are in actuality designed to continue in their neo-colonialist role, the Europeans are attempting to defuse a potential calamity of rupture within the EU structures.

Mustapha Karkouti, a writer for the Gulf News noted in an article that “The two European giants, Germany and France, have recently warned that Europe is facing a serious split over Syria, as both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande have called on the 28 countries comprising the European Union (EU) for unity. Standing side-by-side addressing the EU parliament last Wednesday (Oct. 7) in Strasbourg, they jointly tried to persuade member states that are inward-looking that they will be better off if they remain in the European bloc.” (Oct. 10)

The inter-imperialist rivalry between the EU member-states in competition with the United States and Canada necessitates fomenting the illusion of unity as it relates to the migrant crisis. However, the more recent members such as Hungary which were formerly socialist-oriented states in alliance with the-then Soviet Union, are in a weaker position economically and politically particularly in light of right-wing political parties which are in power in several of these countries.

This Gulf News article continued saying “The appearance of both the leaders in the European parliament is the first since former chancellor Helmut Kohl, the architect of Germany reunification, and former French president Francois Mitterrand, the architects of the Maastricht Treaty that established the EU, appeared together on the same platform in 1989, also stressing the strategic significance of Europe.... The process of enlargement itself has had its own consequences on Europe’s politics and on European life, particularly the gradual rise of right-wing and nationalist trends.”

Long Term Implications of the Migrant Crisis on Europe and the Oppressed Nations

Hundreds of thousands of migrants, many of them from Syria and other states throughout the Middle East, Asia and Africa, have escalated their travels during this year creating a humanitarian and political crisis, with more than three thousand killed so far in 2015.

Images of floating bodies within the sea washing up on the beaches are a profound symbol of failed imperialist policies over the last thirteen years since the beginning of the Afghanistan and later Iraq wars. These photographs and videos of migrants dying in Mediterranean are an extension of the invasions by the Pentagon and NATO forces allied with their political surrogates within the impacted geo-political regions.

In specific reference to Syria, the White House of President Barack Obama is still attempting to justify its role in destroying large swaths of territory within this once stable and prosperous Middle Eastern state. The Russian Federation's air campaign against armed opposition groups in Syria is a direct challenge to the imperialist wars of regime-change that have characterized U.S. policy in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Media reports indicate that over \$500 million in tax revenues of working people has been wasted in a failed attempt to create a so-called "moderate anti-Syrian army" where after several years of efforts, only five of these persons have actually been able to remain within the framework established by the U.S. Despite these claims, there are obviously other groups fighting against the Syrian government that are armed by Washington.

All that these militias have been able to do is to cause monumental deaths, destruction and displacements. Many people around the world as well as within the Middle East have welcomed the intervention of Moscow and Iran in order to defend the Syrian state.

Divisions among the EU member-states will not shield even France and Germany from inevitable social unrest and greater expressions of anti-migrant hostility and xenophobia throughout the continent. Washington has announced that it will welcome anywhere from 10,000-100,000 Syrians into the U.S. which is completely inadequate considering that it is the military and political policies of Washington and Wall Street that lies at the base of the crisis in Syria, Central Asia, Libya, Yemen and Iraq.

These migrants are a direct result of U.S.-led imperialist militarism in various geo-political regions as well as the ongoing world capitalist crisis. Turkey, a NATO state, is heavily involved in the destabilization of Syria raising questions about the source of the bombing in Ankara on October 10 which killed nearly 100 people.

The only real promise of reversing the situation in the Mediterranean, the affected war-ravaged states on three continents and the workers and oppressed within the imperialist countries suffering from the draining of national resources through war and destabilization efforts, is to unite the peoples of these oppressed nations along with the workers and oppressed within the industrialized states in order to force the Pentagon, CIA and NATO forces out of the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia. Then the people of these regions will be able to resolve their own internal problems aimed at bringing genuine peace and security.

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