



Comité International de Mauthausen

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Is Europe Forgetting its Past?

**The International Mauthausen Committee asks the European countries
and the European Union to increase the means for refugees
and to let humanity prevail over bureaucracy.**

The International Mauthausen Committee (CIM) is the umbrella organization of currently 21 member states, representing the survivors from the former Nazi concentration camp of Mauthausen (Austria). Our knowledge of these camps and our experience give us a special sensitivity towards those who are being persecuted, those who are refugees, and those who have been expelled from their home countries. We have become extremely sensitive for every sign of inhumanity and injustice.

The media have published thousands of pictures showing people risking their lives at sea in the hope of reaching Europe's shores, to find hope, peace, security and maybe a future worth living for. So many families, which are currently facing the horrors of war in their home countries, are fleeing. They are looking for safe haven in Europe. So, before new walls are erected in Europe, the International Mauthausen Committee wants to remind us all of heavy weight of history. We renew our commitment "NEVER AGAIN"; the solemn commitment of all the survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. The ongoing current tragedy compels us to raise our voices!

The Europe which is barring the way to thousands of people seems to have forgotten its own past. Its current richness stems also from the exploitation of mineral and human resources from other continents. Visibly, Europe has set aside the lessons from the terrible times of the twentieth century. Many Europeans, in both Eastern and Western Europe, have been refugees themselves during that century. Europe appears to be turning a blind eye to the dangers posed by the mounting appeal of the extreme right and by neo-nazi groups. Instead of building bridges, Europe is erecting walls! The principles of humanism and international law request that Europe and the world community help refugees, instead of losing themselves in petty disputes. Some States do contribute a great deal, but too many simply ignore the principles of responsibility and solidarity.

We demand that Europe does not tolerate what is happening to these families. Necessary action has to be taken so that peace can return to their home countries. Adequate financial resources must be provided to reconstruct the regions which have been destroyed by war and are now descending into poverty and injustice. These people are fleeing war and oppression: they want a life in peace and dignity.

We feel sorrow, helplessness and horror and remember a time when Jews, "Gypsies" and political refugees were pushed around the borders of the so-called democratic states, in a sea of indifference and neglect. We are faithful to the Mauthausen oath of "Never again!" and we will fight so that the lack of international solidarity with refugees will be addressed.

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