

## **THE BORDERS KILL**

### **SATURDAY 8 DECEMBER AT 11:00: MEETING IN PIAZZALE MONTE RE (OPICINA) IN SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE INJURED IN THE ACCIDENT CAUSED BY A MILITARY CAR CHASE.**

On Tuesday 4 December, in Opicina (TS) a serious accident happened involving a van with twelve migrant people piled up onboard and a car with three locals. While being chased by carabinieri for not stopping at a checkpoint at the border, the van hit the car. There were 17 injured, some seriously.

What happened is just one of the many episodes that happen every day along the so-called "Balkan route", a hard, dangerous and expensive route crossed daily by people from different countries to enter the "Fortress Europe", to seek a better life or to escape persecution, war, environmental disasters.

These last months, the bottleneck (i.e. the hardest and most dangerous point on the route) has been the crossing of Croatia and Slovenia. These are European countries that, thanks to EU funding, systematically block migrants en route by not allowing asylum applications, hand them over to special Croatian police teams that humiliate and beat them up and then reject them beyond the fortress (in Bosnia or Serbia).

This practice is daily and well documented. Many people cannot try again immediately after being rejected, and are thus stuck in the refugee camps in Bosnia and Serbia, forced into terrible conditions, sometimes lethal. Those who don't get rejected may make it, others die, as happened ten days ago to Nassim, from Tizi Ghneif (Al Mizan, Algeria), 25 years old, who drowned in the river Reka near Topolc, Slovenia, as he escaped from the police, while his traveling companions were beaten and sent back to Bosnia, and another friend, first taken to hospital after he fainted not seeing Nassim re-emerging from the river, then repelled and beaten with the others; or Ibrahim Ahmad, from Damascus (Syria), just 44 years old, who was last seen a few days ago, falling into the river Dobra between Croatia and Slovenia.

This all happens because people do not have the opportunity to move around freely in Europe, because there exist closed borders whose legal crossing is granted one by one to a few privileged people, while for most people it's impossible. For this reason, the only possible ways to enter the "Fortress" are nocturnal marches in the woods, or hiding under trucks or in containers, or

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even pay someone for passages or advice (the so-called traffickers or passeurs or smugglers) or to pile up in a van.

Tuesday's chase is the result of this situation: it could have ended up with more deaths caused by the border.

We absolutely reject the rhetoric that criminalizes for the incident those 12 people who were playing with their live, to find a new one. To all of them goes our solidarity, as to all people injured in the accident.

We also reject the manipulative rhetoric that call out the inhumanity of the smugglers over land, trying to point them out as the problem in this situation. The smugglers are people who exploit economically the existence of boundaries: they will exist as long as there are boundaries and people who want to go through them but can't.

The problem is that the border is closed. A closed border is a danger for the lives of those who want to cross it. Whoever arrives is not a danger, but a person. The danger is the military on the border: it is because of the military on the border that these people could have died in the accident in Opicina and that every day they may die crossing the borders of the Balkan route.

*[The PD party, following the incident, called for a tightening of the controls, a turnover of law enforcement agencies to block human trafficking, in a boorish attempt to obfuscate, again, the reality we live in.]*

The guilt for this intolerable situation is on those who exalt and close borders, on those who promulgate racist laws and build camps for undocumented people. Boundaries kill every day, here and everywhere in the world. Freedom of movement for all is the only solution -possible and practical - to this end.

**proti mejam! fight borders and those who defend them! solidarity  
without borders!**

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