

Statement of Greek soldiers refusing to confront refugees

Wednesday 4 November 2015, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 19 October 2015).

The following statement is from Greek conscripts in 50 units of the Armed Forces. [1] The statement is notable for linking all the current horrors inflicted on workers everywhere to a single cause - the ongoing crisis of the capitalist system. In this crisis, which demands sacrifices in lost and ruined lives, all workers, whatever their condition, have a common cause and a common interest. The document comes from “Diktyo Spartakos” (“Spartacus Net”), which is a far leftist formation inside the Greek army, mainly composed of the New Left Current (NAR) but it has a broader impact among far leftists and anarchists. Comrades from OKDE-Spartakos (Greek section of the Fourth International) also participate.

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... flesh torn on barbed wire, children drowned on beaches, hungry people on the streets, crowds of people begging for their papers ...

Before they became headline news many of us saw and experienced these shameful images on the River Evros, and on the islands, where we were sent to do our compulsory Military Service of the Absurd as both slave workers and cannon fodder. These scenes have shocked us and dominate our discussions. But we don't want this to become the “new normal”. While not having grown used to and not having accepted the Memoranda and all the policies against the people, imperialist interventions and their dirty wars, we will not accept and not get used to the refugees' plight. It is also the plight of our own people, of our own world, the working class world regardless of nationality-religion-gender!

The so-called “increased flow of migrants” is in reality the flight from war and displacement. It is not a natural phenomenon. Someone is responsible for it. It's their capitalist crisis. To overcome this, they abolish our rights, leaving us starving, in poverty and unemployment, making migration a necessity. It's the USA, NATO, the EU, China and Russia. They impose their financial interests using terror and death, maintaining and reviving new passions and hostilities, feeding on religious fundamentalism. It's also the regional imperialist powers (Turkey, Israel, Greece, Arab governments) that sharpen rivalries in the region.

It is those who speak of failed states and inferior nations, those who treat people as garbage and take part in mopping up operations, transforming entire zones into human storage dumps for brutal exploitation! There is only one enemy of the bourgeoisie and its governments: the workers, whether they fight for their rights or are moving about without documents, even when it is capitalist military interventions that led to the uprooting. But even then, refugees can't choose where to go: they direct migration flows to modern-day concentration camps, the “hot spots”, (2) because workers choose where to be exploited! Of course when they're not needed any more or when they try to better

themselves they can be got rid of ...

The Greek state and the army are part of the problem and not its solution. The SYRIZA-ANEL government continues the War on Terror, participates in imperialistic plans, targets "asymmetric threats" (immigrants, social movements), playing on the false distinction of "good" refugees from war - and "bad" economic migrants. The Armed Forces call on us, the conscripted soldiers alongside professionals and officers, to make war on the "enemy within", as in the recent Parmenionas 2015 (3) exercise! In this cycle of death-exploitation-oppression, the "enemies" of Greece and Turkey jointly patrol the Aegean, cooperating in harmony! Furthermore, the EU battlefield starts from Gibraltar ending in the Aegean, with Frontex (4) taking a decisive role.

A Greek submarine participates in the European fleet that operates in the Libyan territorial waters. We, the 16th Division in Evros, are on guard against migrants coming from Andrianopolis. We're ordered to take part in Crowd Suppression Drills, as in Kos after the dramatic events in Kalymnos when the governor requested military aid to use weapons against hungry-thirsty-imprisoned immigrants. We guard the murderous fence which is the real reason of all the drownings in the Aegean.

WE DON'T FIGHT, WE DO NOT SUPPRESS, WE DON'T HUNT DOWN MIGRANTS

We, the soldiers in struggle are against all this, against both their past and present crimes.

We call for a mass movement, both inside and outside the Army:

To block in any way we can Frontex, NATO, the European army, the actions of the Armed Forces as this massacre goes on. We don't participate in arrest patrols.

To assist in demolishing fences and not creating new ones. No soldier boards ships on missions against migrants.

Ships, submarines and aircraft should return to their bases. There should be no attempt to supply them.

We refuse to convert the Greek army into a repressive apparatus whether that involves migrants or social movements. We will not accept papering over the cracks in the social structure with "volunteer labour". For us the "asymmetric threat" is the war being waged against us by the governments and the interests they support.

We call on our colleagues to not only show compassion but to take note of our common class interests. It is the bourgeois institutions, bourgeois policies, bourgeois governments themselves which are destroying even our dreams.

What the refugees are now going through, constant persecution by totalitarian mechanisms of every kind, in the struggle for dignity and survival their sad present is for many of us the current and future nightmare that we should not have to experience. It is the Parliamentary totalitarian state in collaboration with the NAZI Golden Dawn.

We are aware the coming revolts will find those on the bottom rung either united together or in conflict with each other.

Today there isn't a better form of solidarity in practice which gives the greatest service to ourselves than attacking the problem at its roots.

We are part of a modern anti-war and labour movement that can exist only within a working class, anti-capitalist and internationalist perspective. We resist, oppose, and totally reject the government, its imperialist mechanisms, and the bourgeois world of oppression.

[The original was signed by soldiers from 38 units of the Greek Army]

SIGNED BY PRIVATES OF 50 UNITS

547 Rethymnon Airborne Battalion, Sparta KEEM, 616 Infantry Battalion, Avlona KETTH, 535 MK/TP 31st Brigade, Patra KETCH, Mesologgi KEN 2/39 SP, 526 MK/TP, 124 PVE Tripolis, Cpt. Paraschos 29th Infantry Brigade, ASDYS, 221 EMA Plati Evros, 401 Military Hospital atallion Administration, Thiva KEPV, 16 TYP, Nafplio KEMCH, Evros Chatzipenti Camp, 211 MK/TO 95 LATETH, Araxos 116 PM, 3rd Cooking Education Battalion-Gythio Supply Dept., 647 MK/TP Litochoro, 50 PEA/AP, SDB Karaiskakis B Company Management, 219 KICHNE Didymoteicho, 173 MEAP Orestiada, 516 MK/TP, 424 SN Thessaloniki, Evros Vogiatzis Feres Camp, 642 TP, Bouga Camp, 32 MPP PN, KEN Kalamata, 643 TE Chios, 123 PTE, 618 M/K TO Plati, 296 M/K TE, KAAV Agios Andreas, 93 TYETH Lesvos, 503 TP, 95 TYETH, 22 EMA Petrohori, 25 EMA Petrochori, B EANETH, 107 A/K MMP PEP Didymoticho, 305 SPTCH, 3rd EAN Alexandroupolis, 107 Chatzipenti Koufovouno Camp, Evros 523 Mavrodentri Kozani.

P.S.

* Adapted by IVP (http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/ecriture/?exec=articles&id_article=4272) from UndercoverInfo: <https://undercoverinfo.wordpress.com/2015/11/01/greek-soldiers-refuse-to-confront-refugees-statement/>

Footnotes

[1] There is compulsory military service of 9 months for all males between the ages of 19 and 45 in Greece.