

# Greece: Call of the 300 immigrants

Friday 21 January 2011, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 5 February 2011).

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## Announcement to the society

We, the 300 migrants hunger strikers, we demand legalization of all migrants living and working in Greece and we declare the following:

- We, 300, took the initiative for that kind of struggle, without the intervention of political parties, organizations and individuals.
- We believe that the country that we live in is a democracy and as such must respect human rights and international agreements.
- We are committed and we continue the hunger strike; despite all the pressure and the bad conditions of the place that, by force, we accepted to move.
- We call every free thinking person in Greece or abroad to stand in solidarity with our fair struggle in order to live with dignity.

29 January 2011

5<sup>th</sup> day of hunger strik

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## Athens: police repression forces hunger strikers to move

### ***Night demonstration from Law School to an other central building in Athens, where the hunger strike will continue***

On January 27, 2011, heavy police forces surrounded the Law School, where 250 migrant hunger strikers are fighting for their rights. During a long night, they moved with a demonstration to a other central building in Athens to continue their struggle.

On the third day of the hunger strike of 300 migrants in Athens and Thessaloniki, 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, 5.45pm, riot police encircle the Law School in Athens in apparent preparation for a raid as migrant hunger strikers vow to stay.

The day before, many racists and fascists and the corporate press agitated against the migrant hunger strikers and their struggle for equal rights. Parallels to the fascist dictatorship in Greece came up (see :: The struggle of the 300 hunger strikers is our struggle!).

In the afternoon, Athens' center was blocked by thousands of police, and hundreds of supporters couldn't reach the law school building. Immediately after the :: decision by the 300 migrants in hunger strike to stay in the building, heavy riot police forces have encircled the Law School building. The migrants' assembly decided they would stay despite the demand by university authorities and the government that they move out. The assembly justified the decision based on the fact that the building used by the migrants is unused by the university (under construction) and that the building proposed for the transfer does not meet basic hygienic conditions.

It was very likely that the riot police will now attempt to violate the academic asylum and raid the Law School. At 7.15 pm police completely cordon off Athens Law School and did not allow to people to approach. Approximately 300 hunger strikers and another 300 people in solidarity were still inside the Law School. People have also gathered in solidarity behind the police cordons and also in Exarcheia and Panepistimio in Athens and in Thessaloniki.

The hunger strikers started with negotiations with the authorities. The hunger strikers set several conditions in order to leave the Law School but the government didn't seem ready to agree with all of them so the hunger-strikers and several hundred of supporters incl. some university teachers, students, human rights groups and activists were ready to defend the academic freedom by the police.

Solidarity gatherings with the hunger strikers were organised in Athens, Chania, Thessaloniki, Volos, Mytilene, Kozani, Iraklio and Xanthi.

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## **Greece: Call of the 300 immigrants**

We are migrant men and women from all over Greece. We came here due to poverty, unemployment, wars and dictatorships. The multinational companies and their political servants did not leave another choice for us than risking 10 times our lives to arrive in Europe's door. The West that is depriving our countries while having much better living conditions is our only chance to live as humans. We came (either with regular entry or not) in Greece and we are working to support ourselves and our families. We live without dignity, in the darkness of illegality in order to benefit employers and state's services from the harsh exploitation of our labor. We live from our sweat and with the dream, some day, to have equal rights with our Greek fellow workers.

During the last period our life has become even more unbearable. As salaries and pensions are cut and everything is getting more expensive, the migrants are presented as those to blame, as those whose fault is the abjection and harsh exploitation of greek workers and small businessman. The propaganda of fascist and racist parties and groups is nowadays the official state discourse for issues of migration. The far right discourse is reproduced through media when they talk about us. The "proposals" of the far right are announced as governmental policies: wall in Evros, floating detention centers and European army in the Aegean, repression in the cities, massive deportations. They want to convince greek workers that, all in a sudden, we are a threat to them, that we are to blame for the unprecedented attack from their own governments.

The answer to the lies and the cruelty has to be given now and it will come from us, from migrant men and women. We are going in the front line, with our own lives to stop this injustice. **We ask the legalization of all migrant men and women, we ask for equal political and social rights and obligations with greek workers.** We ask from our greek fellow workers, from every person suffering from exploitation to stand next to us. We ask them to support our struggle. Not to let the lie, the injustice, the fascism and the autarchy of the political and economic elites to be dominant in their own places too; all these conditions that are dominant in our countries and led us to migrate, us and our children, in order to be able to live with dignity.

We don't have another way to make our voices heard, to make you learn about our rights. **Three hundred (300) of us will start a Hunger Strike in Athens and in Thessaloniki, in the 25<sup>th</sup> of January.** We risk our lives, as, one way or another, this is no life for people with dignity. We prefer to die here rather our children to suffer what we have been through.

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### **Call for support to the 300 migrant workers hunger strike in Greece**

In this period economic crisis and neoliberal attack to labour and social rights in greece, we face also a generalized attack to migrants' rights, a broad campaign of PASOK government and the mass media to use migrants as scapegoats of social insecurity, unemployment and "criminality". Frontex Regional Office in Piraeus, Rabits operation in Evros and Poseidon in Aegean Sea, the "screening procedures", mass deportations to Turkey and the wall against migration in the land borders with Turkey describe the racist policies of repression and criminalization of migration, the establishment of a new european Apartheid.

In this context, 300 migrants decided start a big hunger strike in both Athens and Thessaloniki, on January 25<sup>th</sup>. The claim of the hunger strike is a new regularization procedure, the "Legalization of all migrants". It is the bigger hunger strike happened in greece and probably in europe and is taking place in a period of rising racism. Under these circumstances we need all the possible solidarity.

At first publicity: as the greek media will certainly try to underestimate the issue we need international positive publicity. Probably also a text with signatures from groups or individuals from all over europe would be important. Even more an action week in solidarity to the striking migrants will also be very useful.

At second, and probably after the 15<sup>th</sup> of February -20 days after the beggining of the strike- that things will be getting crucial, probably it will be good some of you or other people with "institutional" positions (from unions, ngos, organisations, parties, or whatever) from all over Europe to travel to greece to state their solidarity.

Waiting for your propsals and counting on your solidarity

Yorgos, from Solidarity Assembly to the migrants' hunger strike

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