Press release | 05.05.2022

Frontex: EU Parliament refuses 2020 Frontex budget discharge

Today, the European Parliament refused the 2020 budget discharge for the European border management agency Frontex, and postponed the vote. Fabrice Leggeri resigned from his post as director of the agency following the revelation of various scandals, including Frontex's support for illegal pushbacks. The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the EU Parliament's use of powerful political leverage in the face of Frontex's serious failures. The agency has still not met the demands of the EU Parliament's previous discharge report and has continued to support illegal pushbacks and failed to address internal scandals. With a budget of €118 million in 2011, to be increased to €900 million by 2022, Frontex is the EU agency that receives the most money.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA Shadow Rapporteur for the Budget Discharge report for 2020 for EU Agencies:

"The European Parliament is standing up to Frontex. The border agency cannot be allowed to get away with supporting cover-ups of illegal pushbacks and internal scandals. It is completely unacceptable that the Frontex Management Board refuses to publish the report of the EU's anti-fraud agency OLAF and to allow members of the EU Parliament to see it. We will not tolerate public money being wasted and used to break European and international law."

Tineke Strik MEP, Member of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee, comments:

"Frontex has systematically engaged in serious human rights violations. The refusal of the budget discharge is an important call for reform of the border management agency. Systematic human rights violations at the EU's external borders can never be the practice of an EU agency. The EU cannot continue the use of illegal pushbacks that deny refugees their right to asylum and endangers lives. Frontex must respect the rule of law and values of humanity and solidarity, Therefore it is good that the Parliament calls for Frontex to stop its operations in Hungary. And the same should go for Greece and Croatia. We need more EU Parliament control over Frontex and EU Member States must guarantee access to asylum.

“The resignation of the director Leggeri offers a vital opportunity to appoint a leader who really cares for fundamental rights, and who ensures a fundamental change in the culture and methods of the Agency. However, in order to ban pushbacks, Member States and the European Commission should change their policies as well, and ensure that pushbacks are no longer acceptable and the protection of refugees becomes a common responsibility."

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