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Press release | 18.10.2022

MEPs condemn illegal pushbacks and rejects Frontex discharge

FRONTEX

Today, the Members of the European Parliament rejected the granting of the 2020 discharge to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex. The rejection comes after countless reports from journalists, NGOs and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) regarding internal dysfunctions and allegations of cover ups of fundamental rights violations, including pushbacks. The Agency did not comply with recommendations made by the European Parliament to solve the various systemic problems. The Greens/EFA Group has long been advocating for a rejection of the 2020 discharge to the agency.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA MEP and member of the Committee of Budgetary Control, comments:

"To this date, Frontex has still not carried out the structural reforms called for by the European Parliament in our 2019 discharge report or remedied the human rights violations identified by OLAF. With a budget of 900 million euros in 2022, Frontex is the most well funded European agency. We can no longer tolerate public money being used to violate European legislation and international law.

"By not granting discharge to the Frontex agency, the European Parliament refuses to endorse its illegal activities that deny refugees their right to asylum and put lives in danger."

Saskia Bricmont, Greens/EFA MEP and member of the Committee of Civil Liberties, comments:

"The Greens/EFA group has long been calling for greater accountability and transparency of Frontex. However, as recent press reports confirmed by OLAF highlight, serious questions around human rights abuses, mismanagement and lobbying continue to hang over the agency.

"Frontex and its former management benefited from complacency and a laissez-faire attitude on the part of the Member States. In addition to its numerous internal dysfunctions, Frontex knowingly ignored violations of fundamental human rights and is guilty of indulging national authorities who actively engage in illegal deportation in total contradiction with international and European law."

More:

In April this year, the director of Frontex, Fabrice Lezggeri, was forced to resign following a devastating

report by the European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, which found that Frontex was well aware of the Greek authorities' practice of pushbacks. The OLAF report also found that Frontex actively took measures to ensure that human rights violations would not be witnessed, documented or investigated. This is in stark contrast to the legal obligations of Frontex to ensure human rights are respected.

- Petition "Europe, stop paying for pushbacks!"

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Responsible MEPs



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