

Militarism and Racism: African Leaders Propose A Financial Package to Halt the Flow of Migrants from Africa to Europe

Summit in Malta

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Attacks in Paris turn entire populations into suspects within imperialist states

A gathering of African leaders and European Union (EU) member-states in Malta has resulted in a proposed financial package of nearly \$US4 billion which will ostensibly be utilized to halt the flow of migration from Africa to Europe.

European governments say they are willing to send funds to Africa so that people will not be interested in migrating to the continent. Such a program would in effect turn African presidents and prime ministers into the gatekeepers of Europe.

In 2015, the level of dislocation internationally is worse than any other period since the conclusion of World War II. In Syria alone, it is estimated that 11 million people have been displaced with four million outside the country in neighboring states and other regions.

People from not only Africa but the Middle East and Asia are flooding out of their geopolitical areas seeking refuge from imperialist war and the burgeoning world crisis of capitalism. Rather than address the actual causes of dislocation, migration and the refugee problem, the imperialist states in Europe and their allies are seeking to contain the crisis within the oppressed nations which they have destroyed through centuries of enslavement, colonization, neo-colonization, super-exploitation and militarism.

Hundreds of thousands of migrants have crossed the Mediterranean into Southern, Central and Eastern Europe in recent months creating a humanitarian crisis and exposing the racist character of governments in the EU. Despite the offer of billions to stem the tide of migration, African leaders, even those with close political and economic ties to the imperialist states, have looked upon these proposals from the EU with skepticism and outright rejection.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Europe Editor Katya Adler wrote on November 13 that “in addition to NGO concerns..., African leaders widely dismissed EU offers of cash and other aid, as far too little to tackle the root causes of migration. As flowers go, the extra aid package doesn’t even make the gaudy plastic category.”

Somalian Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, the head of a state that is heavily dependent upon United States and EU funding for the 22,000-member African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), which handles its security along with U.S. and NATO intelligence

advisors, was not impressed with the new offer of cash for containment. The experience of Somalia illustrates that western aid and military occupation does not necessarily translate into social stability and economic prosperity.

Adler noted that “Somalia’s distinctly unimpressed Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke put it to the BBC that Africa needed investment, not charity, to improve its economies. The same as the U.S., the EU or anywhere else in the world, he said.”

Moreover, the EU countries have not even been able to raise the funds for this proposed project with commitment being lukewarm apparently over doubts about the efficacy of such a program. Pledges of aid and other forms of assistance over the last two decades has done very little to halt migration when the foreign policies of these European states have largely been shaped by the U.S. in its so-called “war on terrorism.”

European Divisions Over Migration Continue

An escalation in the migratory pattern from Africa to Europe has accelerated during 2015 which has divided the EU politically. Hundreds of thousands of migrants are being trafficked across North Africa to the Mediterranean where countless numbers have died since January.

Migrants have been met with barriers and brutality in Eastern Europe where several governments are calling for a total ban on people originating in Africa, the Middle East and Asia from entering their countries. Images of desperate migrants being hosed with water cannon evoke sympathy for their plight as well as outrage over such treatment.

The same above-mentioned article by Adler says “Cross-border co-operation is disintegrating as barbed wire goes up and borders slam shut across Europe: in Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, Sweden, Norway. Even Germany is toughening border regulations. In stark contrast to the warm welcome given to hundreds or thousands earlier this autumn, Wolfgang Schaeuble, Germany’s hugely popular finance minister, has begun to mutter darkly about a migrant ‘avalanche’ engulfing his country. There’s little evidence of the EU – more of each country for itself.”

Continued divisions within the EU prompted Council President Donald Tusk to warn that Schengen, the EU agreement allowing passport-free border passage across much of Europe, is in danger of collapse. This accord has been championed internationally as major contributor to the integration of the continent.

Real Causes Neglected While Paris Attacks Reinforce Militarism and Racism

Nonetheless, the underlying issues of imperialist war and the global economic crisis are not being addressed by the EU relying instead on military and police solutions. This new scheme to fund African states to essentially imprison their own people will also collapse.

The attacks in Paris on November 13 that resulted in the deaths of approximately 130 people in a series of operations claimed by the Islamic State (IS) has prompted a security crackdown in France and other EU states. Socialist Party President Francois Hollande in a speech on November 16 called for the revision of the French constitution to allow even greater powers for intelligence and law-enforcement agencies.

Hollande immediately escalated France’s bombing of Syria. This response will create further

dislocation both inside and outside of the embattled Middle Eastern state while the doors of migration will be further closed from Europe to the U.S., where politicians have already announced the denial of admission to Syrian nationals.

It has been the imperialist foreign policy led by Washington which has laid waste to huge swaths of territory throughout North and East Africa, extending into the Arabian Peninsula and down into Central and Southern Asia. The U.S. and NATO occupation of Afghanistan was carried out under the guise of fighting “Islamic extremism and terrorism.”

This war was a direct outcome of the efforts by the administration of President Jimmy Carter in 1979 to undermine the Soviet-allied socialist government in Afghanistan. With the fall of the Soviet Union and other Eastern and Central European socialist states, the emphasis of imperialism was shifted to the attempted realization of a “unipolar world”, where Washington and its allies in Western Europe would dominate military and economic power globally.

Consequently, the “war on terror” is a misnomer. The advent of many of the “extremist groups” is a direct product of imperialist foreign policy.

Retired President Fidel Castro, the former leader of the revolutionary island-nation of Cuba, charged in a column written on August 31, 2014 that leading U.S. political figures are responsible for the creation of IS. He condemned the war policies of Washington and issued a challenge for the modern period.

Castro asked

“Would it not be preferable to struggle to produce food and industrial products; build hospitals and schools for billions of human beings who desperately need them; promote art and culture; struggle against epidemics which lead to the death of half of the sick, health workers and technicians, as can be seen; or finally eliminate illnesses like cancer, Ebola, malaria, dengue, chikungunya, diabetes and others which affect the vital systems of human beings?” (Granma International)

The Cuban theorist and tactician concludes by inquiring whether “If today it is possible to prolong life, health and the productive time of persons, if it is perfectly possible to plan the development of the population in accordance with growing productivity, culture and development of human values, what are they waiting for to do so? Just ideas will triumph, or disaster will triumph.”

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