

Rosarno (Italy). Another pretext for new xenophobic measures

Preliminary note: The resistance of migrants in Rosarno is only one recent example of struggles of migrants in Italy. More Informations about Rosarno can be found on the [website of no-racism](#)

A revolt by non-EU immigrants has broken out in Rosarno (Reggio Calabria). The immigrants are exasperated and tired of being exploited by the 'Ndrangheta (the Calabrian Mafia) which is well-rooted in the local territory and closely connected to politics; and the ill-treatment and violence they are constantly being subjected to. The latest episode took place on Thursday January 7th, when two immigrants were fired at with air guns by two Italians, probably members of the local 'Ndrangheta.

The immigrants, forced to live in makeshift shelters in dramatic and unhygienic conditions, work “off-the-book”, exploited and humiliated by organized crime. With the recent approval of the “security package” in Parliament, which foresees the arrest, imprisonment of up to six months and then deportation for “illegal” immigrants, the conditions these human beings are living in have drastically deteriorated, in every sense.

In Rosarno, inflamed by the xenophobic proclamations from the authorities, the townspeople are calling for the expulsion of the “clandestini” who are protesting in the streets against persecution and exploitation. Police in riot gear are treating the immigrant demonstrators with unjustified violence.

The Interior Minister, Roberto Maroni, from the Northern League, the anti-foreigner, anti-European and secessionist party – has announced through the national press a “zero tolerance policy” towards immigrants who are not in possession of residence permits, and is pressing for mass expulsions and further repression.

Roberto Malini, Matteo Pegoraro and Dario Picciau, co-presidents of the human rights association EveryOne Group, report: “The Italian Government (instead of taking action against the Mafia and the exploitation of immigration – and starting to dialogue with and provide social assistance for immigrant families) appears to want to use the protests as an excuse to speed up and increase its persecutory and racist policies.

The real problem is the Mafia itself, an organization that shifts, in Italy alone, almost two hundred billion euros every year through its control over businesses, finance and politics. Racism, xenophobia and governmental measures that work in favour of organized crime, makes the institutions helpless against the 'Ndrangheta and other criminal organizations.

We really hope” conclude the activists, “that the European and International authorities, like the EU Commission and Council and the United Nations severely condemn the behaviour of the Italian authorities, and orders them to observe the fundamental rights of immigrants and cease all persecutory actions forthwith”.