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### IS-Terror in the refugee camp by JÜRGEN RAHMIG

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Death threats, torture, corruption. Many inhabitants of the Moria refugee camp on the Greek Aegean island of Lesbos live in great fear. They are threatened by Islamist groups, probably IS members, who are taking over control of the camp more and more openly. In particular Kurds and Yazidi are persecuted by them. In the camp, IS slogans are sprayed on the walls and the ideology of the terror militia is spread

MORIA/REUTLINGEN. A former IS fighter is supposed to command as emir in the refugee camp Moria on the Greek Aegean island Lesbos. This is the statement of activist Rafat Al-Hamoud, who himself had spent some time in the camp as a refugee. The Augsburg journalist, Middle East expert and peace activist Simon Jacob spoke with him, as he reports to GEA. Jacob has just returned from Lesbos and is shocked by what he saw and what he was told there.

"Deir Zor (city) remains," is the translation of a slogan on the wall near the camp entrance, says Jacob. "It should be known that the Syrian town to which this slogan on the camp wall refers to was an IS stronghold in Syria." Of course, according to Jacob, no one would write, "the I.S. remains". But in an indirect way, this is exactly what is meant. Obviously there are supporters of the IS in the camp, disguised as refugees. According to the reports of refugees, there is an Islamic structure within the camp. "All of this makes the situation even more dangerous for those who are really in need and suffering."

### The refugees in the camp are in a dilemma

The camps on the Greek islands are hopelessly overcrowded and the local residents of the islands have run out of patience. The worst conditions are on Lesbos, not far from the Turkish coast. Especially in camp Moria they are devastating. At present, almost 9 000 people live in Camp Moria, which was originally designed for around 3 000 people.

Access to running water is limited. There is one functioning toilet for 72 people and one shower for 84 people. The sewage can no longer be cleared properly and it stinks terribly. Children, pregnant women and people with physical and mental illnesses have to wait for months before they can even talk to an official of the Greek asylum authorities and possibly find out what happens next. This is reported by the Oxfam aid organisation. Many refugees have no access to legal assistance. The situation is particularly threatening for women, because the risk of becoming victims of sexual violence and abuse increases significantly with the lack of space and overcrowding in the camp.

They want to give the state another 30 days and then the camp will be closed, Christiana Kalogirou, the regional governor, recently declared. The mayor of Lesbos, Spyros Galinos, warned urgently that the patience of the residents has "reached its limits", a social explosion is threatening. The refugees in the camp are not separated according to ethnicity and religion. Thus, the struggles from Syria or Iraq are directly transferred to the camp.

More and more often violence breaks out in Moria. The camp gained sad fame when a few months ago Kurdish and Yezidi refugees became victims of Islamist persecution there. "I visited the victims in the camp," says Jacob. Arabs armed with sticks and iron bars had especially called Kurdish and Yezidi refugees "infidels" and forced them through the camp. Numerous people were injured, some of them seriously. In view of this situation, the Greek police, who had been called to the camp, were initially completely unable to cope.

About 1,000 people fled from Moria towards a camp in Mytilene, the capital of the island. According to Jacob, there are concrete indications that IS sympathizers are staying in the camp and using it as a hub. "The refugees in the camp are in a dilemma. If they talk about it, their families back home are endangered. "If they don't, the extremists will gain even more power upon them."

Eyewitnesses in Moria say that the attackers of the violent clashes were members of the IS terrorist militia. It must be assumed that hundreds of such "refugees" in the camp are IS supporters and sympathizers and want to spread the evil ideology.

### For 500 euros you can leave Moria towards Athens

"After all these years in the Middle East, I don't see a solution in continuing as before. We don't need a German immigration law. Europe as a whole needs an immigration law that already identifies the attitude, intention and need of each refugee in advance. As bitter as it may sound to some people," says Simon Jacob, "without a sensible programme that is accepted by the entire society, we run the risk of further

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splitting it. And in doing so we are not just playing into the hands of demagogues alone. We also harm those refugees who seek a life of freedom without fear."

"You need a European immigration law," Rafat Al-Hamoud also says. Two years ago, the Sunni Syrian arrived at Lesbos via the Aegean Sea as a refugee. He left one hell to end up in another. In Syria he had been abducted and mistreated several times by the regime and the IS. What he tells Jacob in front of the camera, Jacob can hardly believe at first. According to the statement of the today's activist of the aid organisation "Humans4humanity", in which he supports migrants, former IS fighters had established a kind of caliphate in the camp. With a Sharia court, a torture chamber in the sanitary facilities and a strict regime. These people operate under pseudonyms in the camp, but some refugees are able to identify them.

Victims report that there are plans to take over the island. There is also some talking about the support of "Uncle Erdogan". The young man shows evidence of the mistreatment of refugees on his smartphone and points out that IS sympathizers communicate with hidden and ambiguous symbols like the one at the camp entrance. They spray the battle names of extremists on walls inside and outside the camp ground.

Jacob meets young refugees in the camp. They have been kidnapped and tortured by "members of the IS". They are also mainly young Kurdish and Yezidi men. For fear of the terrorists, they no longer live in the camp, but outside on the beach and spend the night in the open air. The camp administration is obviously not able to protect them and others. One of the young victims, just 19 years old, shows Jacob his back. The young Yezid was tortured massively with a hose, Jacob says. The group tells him that a reward of 1,000 US dollars has been put on the boy's head. This had also been confirmed to Jacob by a lawyer who was present and accompanied him.

The conversation also mentions corruption. Officials in the camp apparently take money. "For 500 euros you can leave Moria for Athens", he was told. Athens is the hub - also towards Germany. Jacob could not verify these statements on site. But why should these men lie?

### **You can see the result of the failed immigration policy**

Greece and its authorities are beyond their capacities. Thus, tensions between new and old camp residents are increasing. In addition, the refugees are now meeting in the camp those they were fleeing from. From one hell into the other, as Rafat AlHamoud describes it. All this is evidence of Europe's failure in refugee policy. "The loser in this situation is the middle of society in Europe that wants to help the refugees." It is increasingly struggling with the inability to coordinate immigration policy in Europe.

"The negative consequences of this policy are manifesting themselves in the form of war-tested and highly criminal clan structures in the European metropolises," says Jacob. "And you can see the result of the failed immigration policy with all the turmoil of a political and social nature, for example in Chemnitz or Berlin. It's time for action. "It's time for a common European immigration policy to counter populist tendencies decisively." (GEA)

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