



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ECLN Statement on the EU's Stockholm Programme:
Oppose authoritarian state practices and create a democratic Europe**

The European Civil Liberties Network, a coalition of civil liberties, activist and human rights groups across Europe, has published a statement calling on civil society groups and individuals to voice their opinions about the EU's Stockholm programme and work towards a democratic Europe.

Civil liberties and democracy are under attack as never before and the need for a collective response to counter these threats has never been greater. The EU has created militarised border controls, discriminatory immigration policies, mandatory and proactive surveillance regimes and an increasingly aggressive external security and defence policy. These policies, that in themselves constitute an attack on civil liberties and human rights, will be extended by the end of this year with the "Stockholm Programme", which sets the agenda for EU justice and home affairs and internal security policy from 2010 to 2014.

The areas of concern are manifold.

Firstly, under national laws implementing EU legislation, state agencies are implementing comprehensive surveillance regimes and beginning to build up a previously unimaginably detailed profile of the private and political lives of their citizens, often in the absence of any data protection standards, judicial or democratic controls.

Secondly, exclusionary immigration and asylum policies are leading to thousands of deaths at Europe's borders as well as on EU territory. Migrants suffer extreme levels of exploitation, racism and social exclusion with the EU, whilst their economic contribution to our economies is not recognised.

Thirdly, the EU is at the centre of a paradigm shift with regard to the way that Europe and the world beyond will be policed. There is a political 'securitisation' of a whole host of complex policy issues, from food and energy supply to social and environmental phenomena such as climate change and migration. The result is an increasingly security-militarist approach to protracted social and economic problems.

Last but not least, all these policies are developed and implemented in a highly unaccountable and undemocratic manner. The EU has developed an internal and external security apparatus comprising law enforcement and security agencies, EU databases and information systems, para-military organisations, a growing military capability. This apparatus is being continually extended by a thinly accountable network of officials.

This situation is unacceptable - to anyone concerned about civil liberties and human rights. The ECLN and other groups and individuals have therefore taken the initiative to inform the public about this assault on their democratic rights and the deterioration of the human rights situation in Europe and beyond. The extent of this threat, and the urgent need to act in defence of democracy, is outlined in detail in the ECLN Statement **Oppose the "Stockholm Programme"**, in which we call on civil society groups and individuals to voice their opinions and concerns about the Stockholm programme and work towards a democratic Europe. The Statement is available on the ECLN and other websites: visit www.ecln.org to find out more.

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See also: <http://stockholm.noblogs.org/>