

## **PRESS RELEASE**

The Solidarity Movement for the Rights of Refugees and Migrants Patras condemns in the strongest terms the murder of Athanasios Lazanias at Saturday dawn. The value of human life is priceless. Regardless of who is the victim and who the perpetrator each time, regardless of the individual motivations, the cruel murder of a human being is a heinous crime.

Sole responsible for the unraveling of the case, for the accountability and punishment is the Greek justice system. Perhaps this is not enough to ease the pain of the victim's family. But we live in an orderly state and we should keep some basic rules. The phenomena of taking the law into one's hand are not consistent with our democratic culture. Much more it is evidently absurd to claim that as a foreigner killed a Greek, all foreigners should be punished. If the offender happened to be Greek, no one would call for the exemplary punishment of all Greeks. With a calm mind we can all understand this.

Conversely, however, we watched with horror the tragic scene that unfolded in the wider region of Piraeus-Patraiki for two nights. Extreme and undemocratic elements took advantage of the turmoil of the incident and turned the area into hell. Equipped for war, they besieged the immigrants who had fled into the factory and attacked the police forces who were attempting to prevent further senseless bloodshed and to preserve human life from the organized right-wing rage.

Results: Police officers injured, people with respiratory problems because of throwing chemicals, fires, images of ruins, feeling of insecurity everywhere. The residents of a large area cannot get out of their homes.

We know that the inhabitants of the area around Piraeus-Patraiki, which is anyway a downgraded area, are facing a real problem. But we are confident that the majority of residents, like the rest of Patras society condemn these events. We all thinking citizens owe to be aware, in order not to live in the future scenes reminding us of the darkest periods of human history. We have to oppose the social cannibalism with social solidarity.

We urge the local authorities to take initiatives, which decongest the situation and to finally take their responsibilities without throwing the ball to a government which anyway does not exist. Let's stop treating the issue with demands for even greater policing because this leads people to initiatives that substitute the police. We need integration policies and not policies of exclusion and ghettoisation. The murder is a police matter but immigration is a social and political.

**The Solidarity Movement for the Rights of Refugees and Migrants in Patras**

<http://www.kinisipatras.gr/>