

Beat: News

Hungary Orban says EU-Turkey migrant deal an illusion.

EU-Turkey.

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USPA NEWS - Hungary's Orban says EU-Turkey migrant deal an illusion.

Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban has said the European Union's promise of money and other concessions for Turkey in return for preventing more people leaving its shores for Europe is an illusion.

"We are begging Mr (Turkish President Tayyip) Erdogan submissively for security on our borders, in exchange for money and promises, because we can't protect them ourselves," Orban told Thursday's mass-selling German daily Bild.

"This is making Europe's future and security dependent on the goodwill of Turkey."

EU countries this month approved a 3 billion euro (\$3.3 billion) fund for Turkey to improve living conditions for refugees there in return for a promise to ensure that fewer of them migrate on to Europe.

The EU is counting on the deal to stem the influx after more than a million refugees poured in 2015, the majority coming from the Middle East or Asia via Turkey. There is little sign of the flow ebbing this year.

Orban has been one of the most outspoken critics of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's welcoming stance towards refugees. On Wednesday, he announced plans for a referendum on EU plans to create a system of mandatory quotas for migrants.

"Brussels is making promises to the Turks that we can't keep "" or don't want to keep. The plan to take in hundreds of thousands of refugees from Turkey and distribute them across Europe is an illusion," he said.

If Hungary agreed to this, he said, "they would tie me up on the flagpole here in Budapest".

(Writing by Caroline Copley and Tina Bellon; Editing by Kevin Liffey)

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