



Zurich und Basel, 19. July 2019

Shocking behaviour in Basel and Zurich against climate activists in custody – protecting the climate is not a crime

At the 8. July 2019, in a peaceful and very successful protest, activists blocked the entrances of the Credit Suisse headquarters in Zurich and the UBS headquarters in Basel. As a result, the climate-damaging business model of the two banks was pushed into the public eye. Around 100 activists were arrested and many held for almost 48 hours. One activist is still currently in detention.

During the eviction and later in custody, the police have behaved in ways that are at least questionable and that show a deep distaste towards the detained activists. The Collective Climate Justice has drawn up a list of incidents that were reported. The complete list can be consulted [here](#).

The incidents are multifaceted and shocking in themselves but even more so in the aggregate. Activists were not only insulted (e.g. "tomboy", "piece of shit", "cunt") but also bullied for example by having to strip naked and being searched three times. Fundamental rights such as the right to a lawyer were ignored (Article 129.1 of the Swiss Criminal Procedure Code). Access to vital goods such as water, medication, toiletries or nutrition required for health reasons was denied. Some incidents verge on torture such as the removal of blankets and mattresses from cells during the night at constant bright lighting.

The Collective Climate Justice is shocked at the conditions of the Basel and Zurich police as well as the Swiss penal system. Spokesperson Frida Kohlman: "What does it tell us about a state when peaceful protesters are humiliated in this way while at the same time it protects corporations that massively contribute to global climate change.?" The Collective Climate Justice notes that these actions by the banks and police against the interests of the public have caused broad outrage and has led many members of the public to offer their help or wanting to participate in follow up actions. The successful blockades have visibly strengthened the climate movement in Switzerland and globally.

Numerous penalty orders are being contested in Zurich and Basel. The Collective Climate Justice demands that the penalty orders are dropped immediately and that the recent incidents are looked into by an external investigation. It is not acceptable that there are conditions similar to authoritarian states in a democratic country such as Switzerland. The climate movement will not be intimidated. The fight for climate justice and the preservation of a liveable planet is too important to be hindered by repression.

Further information and contact

1. For further information see: <https://www.climatejustice.ch>
2. If you have any questions please contact medien@climatejustice.ch or phone Frida (+41 77 909 76 83)
3. [Images of the actions](#)
4. [Fundraiser for detained activists](#)

Background: climate breakdown sponsored by Credit Suisse und UBS

Credit Suisse and UBS are the main culprits of the Swiss finance sector in contributing to global climate change. While no oil is being extracted and no coal is being burned in Switzerland itself, by financing such projects they are being made possible in the first place. The Swiss finance sector causes 20 times as many greenhouse gas emissions as Switzerland itself. Between 2016 and 2018, through financing projects and companies linked to fossil fuels, UBS and Credit Suisse have directly invested 83.3 billion USD into increasing global climate change.

As an example, both banks are involved in the destruction of the Hambacher forest and the brown coal extraction (in West Germany). Additionally, Credit Suisse invests in fracking projects in west Texas. Even though Switzerland has ratified the Paris Climate Agreement and the IPCC special report urges us to limit warming to 1.5 degrees, due to the investments of the Swiss financial sector we are rapidly approaching global temperature increases of 4-6 degrees.

Who is the Collective Climate Justice?

The actions at UBS and CS have been initiated by the Collective Climate Justice. Amongst the activists there were many individuals of different political backgrounds but also members of the "Collectif Break Free Suisse", "Bewegung für den Sozialismus", "Multiwatch", "Es Zündhölzli für Banke", "Revolutionärer Aufbau" and Greenpeace. As a climate movement, the Collective Climate Justice fights for climate justice and for a livable future for all.

We demand:

- That the Swiss financial sector immediately adheres to the demands of the Paris Climate Agreement. This especially means a speedy and complete divestment from coal, oil and gas.
- Furthermore, we demand climate justice: moving towards a society free from fossil energy has to be fought for by all and should guarantee equal social and economic security to all. Neither in our society nor in the global south should people be put at a disadvantage.
- To reach these goals, we need a direct democratic system in politics and the economy that is concerned with the needs and well-being of all people.