

"FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT INSTEAD OF DEPORTATIONS!"

Europe has turned its borders into deadly fortresses, turned the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the Sahara into mass graves and, in collaboration with oppressive and corrupt governments, outsourced its border regime far onto the African continent.

Deportations are one of the most powerful and violent practices of the border regime. Deportations draw a merciless line between those who are allowed to move freely between countries and those for whom freedom of movement is declared an unreachable privilege – and between those whose lives count and those whose lives are considered disposable. Deportations solidify racist divisions as well as the top and bottom and colonial division of the world.

With the action day "Freedom of movement instead of deportations", we are sending a loud signal of transnational solidarity against deportations from Europe to African countries and between African countries. And we want to make it especially clear that the border regime and deportations can only function because governments of the Global South and their security apparatuses collaborate:

German deportation policy and collaboration of embassies

Germany and other European states regularly deport citizens of many African countries. To do so, they need the collaboration of the embassies or other authorities of the countries of origin to issue travel documents for deportations. For example, on 16 March, coordinated deportations of refugees were carried out throughout Germany by charter flight to Guinea. Prior to that, on 9 March, people of (supposed) Guinean origin were brought before a Guinean delegation in Berlin in order to "identify" them and issue deportation papers. Police force was used and the conditions were unlawful. Alpha Oumar Bah, a refugee from Guinea living in Berlin, presumably took his own life because of fear and trauma caused by the threat of deportation.

EU exports border regimes and deportations

The states of the EU use their economic and political power to put pressure on states of the Global South to collaborate in deportations. Currently, they are threatening 13 so-called "unwilling" states – among them Mali, Senegal, Cameroon and The Gambia – with stricter restrictions on the granting of visas for their citizens.

The policy of externalising European borders also ensures that many states on the African continent make it difficult for their citizens and the citizens of other African states to move and cross the borders – and that they themselves deport many thousands of citizens of other African states.

The establishment of a repressive border regime by EU states on African soil also goes hand in hand with the tightening of authoritarian rule by the rulers of the states concerned against their populations and the use of the expansion of police and security apparatuses to suppress protest movements.

Like the Libyan militias, the governments, armies and police forces of the Maghreb countries have been brutal border guards for years and receive money, weapons and security technology from Europe to do so.

Algeria and Niger: mass deportations and state repression

The Algerian security forces regularly carry out raids with mass arrests at the residences of sub-Saharan migrants. They deport thousands of citizens of many different African countries with deportation convoys into the desert at the borders to the neighbouring countries Niger and Mali. The deported people are mistreated and their lives are put at danger.

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At the same time, the Algerian state is carrying out massive repression against human rights activists and social movements in response to the mass protests that intensified in 2020.

The state of Niger itself has maintained a deportation agreement with Algeria for years. In addition, the Nigerien state receives many millions of euros from the EU within the framework of cooperation agreements to combat "irregular migration". Many thousands of people are stranded in Niger due to mass deportations, while crossing the Sahara is more life-threatening than ever as a result of increased controls on travel routes. Nigerien human rights activists report increased raids on migrant "ghettos". Here, too, political repression is on the rise: Imprisonment of civil society activists, police violence against demonstrations and shutting down the internet after protests following the last presidential elections.

Tunisia and Germany: closure of the Mediterranean, deportations and criminalisation

Young people regularly try to cross the Mediterranean from Tunisia to Europe. The EU external border forces people to make the life-threatening journeys across the sea and closes Tunisian society's access to the Mediterranean. The isolation and lack of freedom of movement play a major role in Tunisia's difficult situation and make it hard to set up democratic structures.

Even in the midst of the Corona pandemic, Germany and Tunisia continue to collaborate on deportations. Almost every month there are collective deportations from German airports to Tunisia. Consistently, Tunisians are held in deportation detention for weeks in preparation for their deportation. The constant fear of deportation exerts great pressure on those affected and forces them into illegality and criminality.

In Europe, the protagonists of the deportation policy regularly conduct racist criminalisation campaigns against people from the Maghreb states and sub-Saharan African countries – recently against Tunisians, Algerians and Moroccans in Saxony and against Guineans in Berlin and other cities.

With the transnational day of action, we set a sign of solidarity for freedom of movement and against deportations. This is essential in times of the Covid pandemic, where closed borders and new deadly barriers threaten to become the new normality, especially for people of the Global South.

In the Covid crisis, as elsewhere, "Let's respect ourselves and others! Deportations do not solve problems!" (Artist Collective Faso Kele from Guinea)

On 21 May, actions will take place at the following locations:

Berlin/Germany: Embassy Tour to the embassies of Niger, Tunisia and Algeria.

Agadez/Niger: Night of the Migrants. Migrant artists show their skills and set a sign of human dignity against dehumanisation through mass deportations from Algeria.

Sokodé/Togo: Meetings and discussions to raise awareness among the Togolese public about deportations and repatriations of migrants to Togo, accompanied by a programme on local radio.

Kindia/Guinea: The Artists' Collective Faso Kele uses artistic performances to raise awareness about human rights and migration policies that violate human rights, and addresses young people in search of a better life.

Bamako/Mali: Malian activists show solidarity with the Malian diaspora and other migrant communities against deportations and human rights violations on the migration routes.



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Programme of the Embassy Tour on the 21st of May 2021 in Berlin:

09:30 to 10:30: Embassy of the Republic of Niger. We demand: Niger must not accept any further deportations from Algeria. End of collaboration with the European migration regime. No to the criminalisation of migration, no to leaving people to die in the desert. Protect the human rights of all migrants and refugees stuck in camps and migrant "ghettos" in Niger.

12:00 to 13:00: Tunisian Embassy. We say no to the closure of the Mediterranean and no to travel documents for deportations to Tunisia.

14:30 to open end: Algerian Embassy. We demand an end to mass deportations from Algeria to Niger and Mali and no travel documents for deportations from Europe to Algeria. We show solidarity with Algerian civil society activists affected by repression.

We will travel between the embassies by public transport. We want to use the stops at the stations and in buses and trains to distribute flyers and inform about our demands and the day of action. **There will also be a few seats on the Solibus, which also travels between the embassies.** We will make sure that all necessary measures are taken to protect all participants from Corona.

We protest in solidarity, keeping distance and wearing masks, as part of the movements advocating for solidarity-based and anti-racist responses to the Covid crisis during the embassy tour.

We want to show loud and clear at the action day "Freedom of movement instead of deportations":

- **No to the collaboration of African states with European border and deportation policies!**
- **No to the issuing of travel documents for deportations!**
- **No to the blackmail of "readmission unwilling" states of the Global South!**
- **Redistribution of money and resources for just and self-determined development in African states instead of money, weapons and security technology for arming borders!**
- **No to deportations from Germany to Guinea, Tunisia or Algeria! No to deportations from Algeria to Niger and Mali! No to all deportations!**
- **For freedom of movement for all, for the right to leave and for the right to stay!**
- **There as well as here: For a good life for all, everywhere!**
- **Solidarity with all deportees!**
- **Solidarity with all Harraga!**
- **Solidarity with all people on the migration routes!**
- **For a dignified life for all, everywhere!**



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