Newsletter Nr. 5 (February 2012)

I. Introduction:

This newsletter is available in German, English and French. It informs about the activities of the transnational network Afrique-Europe Interact. Afrique-Europe Interact is a network of grassroots activists from Mali, Burkina Faso, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. More information about the aims and members of our network can be found on our website in three languages:

www.afrique-europe-interact.net

New activists are always welcome! Anyone interested can subscribe to our transnational mailing list “Afrique-Euro” (Mail to nolagerbremen@yahoo.de).

In addition you can find the contact details of several groups in Mali, Germany and Autria on our website.

II. News

From the 20th of February to the 18th of March a delegation of seven members from the European section of Afrique-Europe-Interact will travel to Mali and Togo (whereupon not all activists will go everywhere). Ous plans in detail:

a) The center of the tour will be a 6-day-trip to the Office du Niger – the area in Mali in which huge land areas have been sold to globally operating banks, investment fonds and business companies for years. It is the purpose – together with the persons concerned and peasant organisatzion – to look for possibilities of common transnational actions against landgrabbing. 20 – 30 activists from the Malian section of Afrique-Europe-Interact will also participate in the trip. On our website you can find detailed information about landgrabbing:

Deutsch: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/?article_id=605&clang=0
Französisch: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/?article_id=605&clang=2
English: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/?article_id=605&clang=1

b) After this trip a general assembly of Afrique-Europe-Interact will take place in Bamako the 10th and 11th of March. On the one hand side in order to evaluate the activities which have been taken place since the Bamako-Dakar-Caravan, but also in order to talk about common projects in the future.

c) In our last newsletter we referred to the donation campaign with which the European section wanted to support the political work of the Malian groups of Afrique-Europe-Interact. (The motto of the campaign was: “Let's tackle redistribution practically ! Donation campaign for grassrout initiatives in Mali”). Fortunately we managed to collect the intented 11 000 Euro between june 2011 and january 2012. On the occasion of the delegation trip the money will be handed over to the Malian groups.

d) In the middle of March three activists from the European delegation will then got to Togo for two weeks, in order to get together with the ATE (Association of the deported Togolese people). Activists of the ATE participated in the Caravan; in addtion there have been contacts between activists in Germany and Togolese people, who have been deported from Germany for a long time.

III. Developments since august 2011

Of course a lot has happened since our last newsletter in august 2011. We therefore want to shortly report only on those activities in which the African and the European Section of Afrique-Europe-Interact have directly worked together:

a) In November 2011 three delegates of the Malian section came to Europe – with presentations in Berlin, Bahnsdorf, Bremen, Amsterdam, Köln, Göttingen, Franfurt (Noborder conference), Freiburg, Munich and Vienna. In the presentations they reported about the ambivalent reception of the so-called Arab spring in West Africa, and about social struggles in Mali (among them struggles against landgrabbing, privatization and the disadvantage of women). You can find further information about the trip in an article which was published in a German monthly newspaper (which is by now also available in French):

German: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=579&clang=0
French: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=618&clang=2

b) On the occasion of the circular trip a 120-pages broschure (German/French) with the title “Mouvements autour des frontieres/Grenzbewegungen” (movements on the border) was published, in which the Bamako-Dakar-Caravan is evaluated in detail – last but not least the difficulties, achievements and challenges in the process of common organisation of African and European grassroots activits. The first edition of the brochure with 1000 exemplars is already out of print, therefore at the moment the second edition is prepared, in which also several translation mistakes will be corrected. You can find extracts of the brochure on our website:

German: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=569&clang=0
French: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=569&clang=2

You can order the broschure for 5 – 10 euro under this address: nolagerbremen@yahoo.de (Activist with only little money can geht the brochure for free.)

c) The delegation trip was very positively received at many places. In Vienna (Austria) a local group of Afrique-Europe-Interact was founded as a direct reaction to the two presentations with the Malian activists. but also in Mali the reports have given fresh impetus…

d) In december a delegation of three people from the European Section of Afrique-Europe-Interact went to Tunisia. Among other activities they participated in an action of relatives of disappeared people, that is people who disappeared on their way to Europe in small boats. Pictures and reports on this action you can find ou our website:

German: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=585&clang=0
English: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=585&clang=1
French: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=585&clang=2

The visit is associated with the project “flotilla of solidarity”, the beginning of which was postponed to the 5th of July 2012 for several reasons. More infomation you can find on our website or on the international website of the project: http://boats4people.org/index.php/fr/ With their participation in the project “flotilla of solidarity” the European section of Afrique-Europe-Interact, among other things, wants to strenghen the contacts to activists in Tunesia respectively in Northern Africa, in order to also expand the cooperation between grassroots initiatives in Sub-Sahara-Africa, Northern Africa and Europe (as a direct answer to the present politics of the EU, who wants to only establish a so-called “mediterranean space”

between the northern african and southern european countries).

e) In December the AME (Association of the deported Malian People) celebrated their 15th anniversary. For this occasion the European Section has written a solidarity message, recalling the important role, which the AME has played for the formation of the network:

German: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=575&clang=0
French: http://www.afrique-europe-interact.net/index.php?article_id=582&clang=2