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Call for the campaign against deportation, deportation prisons and deportation camps against self-isolation and exclusion

Refugees and migrants are confronted with a repressive system in Europe. Germany wants to open up only conditionally for the desired labour migrants in the sense of the "business basis" thinking of the immigration act. But, as before, who has gotten over the militarily armed European Union external borders, meets similar ones in the interior. Not borders of territory, but socially defined boundaries intersperse the interior with a thick network of control. They affect people who are categorized as not German, by their outward appearances. Refugees and migrants must constantly reckon on "controls independent of suspicion" at public places, streets and around railway stations. They are stigmatised and isolated

by numerous, legally fixed special treatments. For example, refugees are not allowed to leave the district where they have been placed. Many are accommodated in collective homes, where they are patronized by the so-called principle of benefits in kind. In many Bundesländer, even people who have a flat receive ration cards, electronic cards or food boxes instead of cash. The central foreigners registration (Ausländerzentralregister) contains everyone whose origin is not German. That list of notes could be continued for long - deportation detention and deportation camps take their place among the discriminatory behaviour against undesired people.

Deportations

Essential part of the German migration policy is the deportation practice. Every year, more than 50,000 people are deported out of Germany, the most of them by aircraft. That means 130 to 140 people every day, who are forced back into the situation where they had fled from: civil war, ethnical or sexist suppression, political persecution, missing basis and perspective for living. We oppose that: all people have the right to decide on their own, where and how they want to live.

Deportations are often accompanied by BGS-officers or private security services,

who are also ready to use violence, to force the deportation. People who defend themselves are beaten, gagged and tranquillised by psychiatric drugs. In that way, several people have been killed in Germany in connection with deportations. The culprits and the responsible authorities have not been prosecuted so far, the system of deportation not been questioned. The dead and mistreated refugees and migrants are consciously accepted victims of a brutal deportation practice. It has also its place in the new "immigration law": in future, there are to be not less, but more deportations.

Deportation imprisonment

The word "deportation prison" is, in its connection of "deportation" and "prison", clear enough. Because only in order to facilitate the deportation of refugees and migrants without permission to stay, they are deprived of their freedom. According to the logic of foreigners offices, committing magistrate (Haftrichter) and police, declined applicants for asylum, sorted-out

labour migrants or formerly tolerated civil war refugees are only one thing: potential "illegals", who most likely want to escape their deportation.

Being an administrative act from the authorities' point of view, this practice is fatal for the concerned people: It is not understandable for them to be deprived of their freedom. They experience this as

to be an attempt to discourage and punish them for their mere existence. They are, under prison conditions, to participate in their deportation into the country which they left out of their misery. If they don't, they remain in prison. Getting or staying in contact with the outside world is made difficult, so they are isolated. Looking after their rights, be it only the right to appeal against imprisonment, is impossible in most cases, because they can not finance a legal adviser. Riots and hunger strikes are the most drastic, but regularly occurring attempts to escape from imprisonment, to draw public attention to their situation and to protest against the wearing uncertainty. But residing in deportation arrest has frequently

less visible side effects, such as attempted suicides, depressions, insomnia, stress, continuous exhaustion, or states of panic. Because in the end, the deportation prisoners are not released, but deported into their countries of origin. For the residents, as a rule, it is not foreseeable what time, and if, this happens - a state that can last up to one and a half year. Since 1993, there have been 99 people committing suicide in the face of the imminent deportation from Germany, or dying during the attempt to flee from deportation; 45 of them in deportation arrest. Deportation arrest is such a massive intrusion on people's rights of freedom and integrity that is has to be abolished without substitute.

Deportation camps

As supplement to deportation prison, a new scheme of forced measures is spreading in Germany right now: deportation camps, played down in calling them "departure centres". Refugees who cannot be deported due to missing documents are detained there. By means of institutionalise them by force in deportation camps, for an unlimited time, refugees are torn out of their social background, lose their jobs and are forced to leave behind home and friends. In this manner they are meant to be urged to "contribute" to their own deportation. From experience with already existing pilot schemes in Niedersachsen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Nordrhein-Westfalen and Sachsen-Anhalt, not only the push-through of the "obligation to depart" in masses, but also the illegalisation of refugees in vast numbers is the main result of the deportation camps. While about 10% of the refugees on average are deported, or forced to leave "voluntarily", almost 50% were driven into illegality.

In the existing deportation camps, they work offensively by means of psychological pressure, and criminalisation, in order to send the affected persons - according to an official pronouncement - into a "mood of hopelessness and disorientation". The catalogue of measures of re-

pression contains the total deprivation of money and chance to earn money, the destruction of every privacy as well as bonds of trust by including even the social workers as spies, the total lack of something to do, and the wearing control mechanisms such as the obligation to register regularly, interviews, limitation of the radius of legal movement as far as possible, and prison sentences due to special penal laws.

The official allegation on the part of the government, saying that "departure centres" were an alternative, replacing deportation arrest, proves to be not correct, since no Bundesland ever since has abolished deportation prison, following the instalment of deportation camps. Instead, the deportation camps serve to extend the opportunities of repression to "contribute" to one's own deportation or expulsion to a vaster and vaster number of refugees. Current developments in some Bundesländer prove that more and more refugees are subject to that new camp regime.

We reject firmly the universe of camps and prisons in Germany and Europa, being an expression of an Apartheid policy. For freedom of movement and self-determination everywhere!

Take part in the Campaign against Deportations, Deportation Prisons and Deportation Camps!

To mark the beginning, we call for an "open day" on 2nd November 2002! Keep yourself up-to-date at www.abschiebehaft.de, support initiatives and groups locally, and have the courage to oppose deportations, deportation prisons and deportation camps!

Dates and announcements at www.abschiebehaft.de