



EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST RACISM

The voice of the anti-racist movement in Europe

Brussels, 3 September 2020

Urgent solidarity call to support Portuguese anti-racist activists

In recent months, there has been a very concerning rise of racist attacks of the far right in Portugal, confirming that the hate messages are fueling more aggressive tactics targeting human rights defenders (HRD) from racialised minorities. Since 2019, when the Portuguese far-right party for the first time gained seats in parliament, far-right activists have been emboldened to commit racially motivated crimes against people of colour in Portugal. Prominent HRDs and their families have been personally targeted and threatened, and have faced hate speech, death threats, and judicial harassment.

ENAR and 88 civil society organisations and MEPs stand firmly in solidarity with our fellow activists who work tirelessly to promote justice and challenge racism to protect our communities. We call for an urgent response from Portuguese authorities to effectively protect racialised groups from racist crime, ensure proper investigations and prosecution of perpetrators, and sanction those inciting hatred and violence. We also call on the EU institutions to take effective measures to ensure that HRDs are protected in Europe.

In January this year, a Portuguese woman of African descent and her daughter were racially attacked due to a missing bus ticket in Lisbon. In February, two Brazilian women were victims of police brutality during the street carnival festivities close to a Cape-Verdian nightclub. In the same month, the football player of African descent Moussa Marega was verbally attacked and insulted by supporters during a national match. In July, the Portuguese actor of African descent, Bruno Candé was murdered in an explicitly racially motivated crime in the streets of Lisbon. These are the more prominent cases, but SOS Racismo has collected data on more than 700 racially motivated crimes since 2012.

In this context, anti-racist organisations and activists are not safe either. SOS Racismo, one of ENAR's founding members, and its leader, HRD Mamadou Ba, are under a protracted attack, as are other activists. In the beginning of 2020, Mamadou received a letter with a death threat and one bullet case at his home. Since June, the headquarters of SOS Racismo were vandalised twice with swastikas and racist slurs. In August, SOS Racismo, Mamadou, Beatriz Gomes and Joacine Katar Moreira (two Black MPs) received threats by e-mail. The far-right group leading all these attacks informed them of a deadline of 48 hours to leave the country, threatening to murder them and the members of their families if they did not leave. The brutality, volume and frequency of attacks are increasing and leaving HRDs unsafe, especially in a context where they do not feel protected by authorities: the latest [ECRI report¹](#) reports an increase in the number of far-right affiliates in national police forces.

¹ ECRI Report on Portugal (fifth monitoring cycle), 2 October 2018

We therefore urgently call for an institutional response from Portuguese authorities. They should conduct sound and effective police investigations and hold all those inciting hatred and promoting violence against HRDs to account through a full process of law. A lack of institutional response only reaffirms the historical sense of impunity for perpetrators of racist violence and denies the state of urgency to address racism in Portugal.

We also call upon the European Union, especially the German Presidency, to denounce the rising racially-motivated violence and threats against HRDs in Europe and address the threat of far-right extremism. While the EU is renowned for its support for HRDs worldwide, it must start looking inward and take effective action to address the increasing threats faced by HRDs within Europe, especially those acting against racism and promoting non-discrimination in Europe.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” said Martin Luther King. We do not need martyrs. We need protection for our leaders and our communities.

Co-signed by:

Civil society organisations:

1. ABVV-ACOD Cultuur (BE)
2. ACOD VRT (BE)
3. Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland (IE)
4. Afrolink (PT)
5. Anti-Racist Forum (FI)
6. Alliance4Europe (EU)
7. Antihitler-Coalition (int)
8. Altera (IT)
9. Apna Haq (UK)
10. Arciragazzi Portici (IT)
11. Asociación Musulmana por los Derechos Humanos (ES)
12. Associação Kazumba (PT)
13. Associated of African Students in Europe – AASE (EU)
14. Association for Integration and Migration – SIMI (CZ)
15. Balbriggan Integration Forum (IE)
16. Bamko (BE)
17. Bepax (BE)
18. Casa do Brasil de Lisboa (PT)
19. Center for Peace Studies (CR)
20. Central Council of German Sinti and Roma (DE)
21. Cestim (IT)
22. Collective Against Islamophobia in Belgium (BE)
23. Cooperativa Giolli (IT)
24. Corporate Europe Observatory (EU)
25. CRAN (FR)
26. Czech Helsinki Committee (CZ)
27. Defend Democracy (EU)

28. Djass - Associação de Afrodescendentes (PT)
29. ELLA (BE)
30. European Forum of Muslim Women (EU)
31. European Network of People of African Descent – ENPAD (EU)
32. European Network Against Racism – ENAR (EU)
33. European Network of Religion and Belief - ENORB (EU)
34. European Network of Women of African Descent - ENWAD (EU)
35. Friends of the Earth Europe (EU)
36. Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations - FEMYSO (EU)
37. Generation 2.0 (GR)
38. Greek Forum of Migrants (GR)
39. Hand in Hand (BE)
40. Il Razzismo è una brutta storia (IT)
41. Inequalities Research Network (UK)
42. Integratiepact (BE)
43. International Federation of Resistance Fighters – FIR (EU)
44. Instituto de Asuntos Culturales España (ES)
45. Irish Network Against Racism – INAR (IE)
46. Karamah (EU)
47. Kif Kif (BE)
48. KISA (CY)
49. Migrant Tales (FI)
50. Minderhedenforum (BE)
51. NICRE (UK)
52. Le Monde des possibles (BE)
53. Reclaim Rights Democracy (EU)
54. Red Española de Inmigración y Ayuda al Refugiado (ES)
55. Revibra Europe (EU)
56. SIEMPRE – Latin Women visible (BE)
57. ORBIT vzw (BE)
58. People for Change Foundation (MT)
59. PICUM (EU)
60. Rede sem Fronteiras (int)
61. Roma Community Centre (LT)
62. School zonder racisme (BE)
63. SEMPER Scotland (UK)
64. SOLIDAR (EU)
65. SOLIDAR Foundation (EU)
66. SOS Malta (MT)
67. SOS Racisme Denmark (DK)
68. The Good Lobby (EU)
69. UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab - People of African Descent & the SDGs E-Team (int)
70. United Sikhs (UK)
71. Waterford Integration Services (IE)

72. WeMove Europe (EU)

Members of the European Parliament

1. Abir Al-Sahlani (RENEW) – ARDI Member
2. Alice Kuhnke (Greens) – ARDI Member
3. Anna Cavazzini (Greens) – ARDI Member
4. Brando Benifei (S&D) – ARDI Member
5. Dietmar Koster (S&D) – ARDI Member
6. Gwendoline Delbos-Korfield (Greens)
7. Hilde Vautmans (RENEW) – ARDI Vice-Chair
8. Jakop Dalunde (Greens)
9. José Gusmão (GUE/NGL) – ARDI Member
10. Karen Melchior (Greens) – ARDI Member
11. Marisa Mattias (GUE/NGL) – ARDI Member
12. Michael Bloss (Greens) – ARDI Member
13. Miguel Urban Crespo (GUE/NGL) – ARDI Member
14. Monica Silvana Gonzalez (S&D) – ARDI Co-President
15. Par Holmgren (Greens)
16. Pernando Barrena (GUE/NGL) – ARDI Member