



25 YEARS OF SOLIDARITY IS NOT ENOUGH!

Invitation to the meeting for the 25th anniversary of the CARAVAN held in Wuppertal from September 1 to 3, 2023

Dear friends,

this year our network exists for 25 years. We have lost sight of each other. But the memory of the shared moments remains. The suffering inflicted on us united us. We fought together. We had success in the defensive struggles against deportations, against the isolation in the camps... Numerous deportations were prevented. Many camps closed. But we also had to cope with defeats. Sisters and brothers were deported from our midst. We had to watch how they lose precious days, weeks, months, years of their lives but also their joy and hope in the isolation. We had to endure how children have to grow up isolated in the middle of a society full of material wealth behind barbed wire. We have seen sisters raped in police cells or brothers shot on the streets or burned in police cells.

The misery forced us to organize. We went public and stood up against a system that degrades, dehumanizes, and then deports us. We fought against a system that exploits us and builds up wealth from our hands work and the raw materials of this earth, but at the same time pushes us as dirty and "savages" to the south. We proudly said NO with our slogan: "We are here because you are destroying our countries!" How right we were with this strong expression of self-assertion as oppressed, outcasts, colonized! The evidence later followed in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Syria, Mali, Yemen... So many wars and crimes were committed. Millions of people have been driven into poverty in the last 25 years by the agricultural reforms of the WTO, EU or their trade agreements.

At the same time, since the first CARAVAN, since the birth of the slogan "Asylum is a human right and not a privilege!" many things have changed legally and socially in the Federal Republic of Germany. The immigration law, Hartz IV, the right to stay agreement, numerous adjustments to the right of residence all came under the guise of modernization. But today we see a more perfidious categorization of refugees, deportations, and misery ... and the resistance is silent. The independent voice of the refugees, which found strong expression in 1998, is no longer heard in public discussions. The self-organized collective struggles of the refugees are reduced to isolated individual or single cases.

Despite but not only because of all these negative impressions, we want to come together. We want to come together because it is a pleasure to see former companions. Because every gathering can be a new hope. Because we can't just

dream about what a more human world could look like. We experienced them in the brief moments of being together. The experienced solidarity within the caravan across continents is and remains a unique experience in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. The experienced willingness to give everything and react immediately if we are attacked, as well. But we see that it was not enough. We see that we have moved away from each other.

We therefore invite you to Wuppertal to get closer to each other again. We want to see each other and exchange ideas. We want to remember the 25 years. We want to be aware of the experiences. The programme is still being developed. Some have started and from meeting to meeting we are getting more. We have developed ideas in the preparatory meetings so far. We have seen that the positive energy of solidarity has helped us survive. However, this solidarity has always been a response to attacks. It was mostly spontaneous. Therefore, in this year's meetings in Hamburg and Bremen, we realized that spontaneous solidarity against colonial and imperialist barbarism is not enough. Barbarism must be countered by organised solidarity, so that our children have hope for a better future. Only such structures that refugees and migrants are self-determined, self-governing and self-supported can work in their favor and promote collective processes for their well-being. Ideas have been developed, but they have not been worked out and will only be collectively discussed, concretized and planned after the 25th anniversary of the festival. Until the 25th anniversary of the festival at the beginning of September, two more meetings are scheduled: The first on May 20 and 21 in Berlin and the second on July 29 and 30, 2023 in Wuppertal.

We would love to hear from you, read or see you at the meetings. We also try to reach everyone personally. Maybe you still have contact with other sisters and brothers and can forward this invitation.

If you want to come to Wuppertal at the beginning of September, please register at anmeldung@thecaravan.info so that we can make the preparation better. For sleeping places, we have reserved rooms in a hotel as well as friendly families in Wuppertal. Please send an e-mail to schlafen@thecaravan.info to arrange the overnight stay in advance. The rooms in the hotel will be available until the end of June, after which the contingent for the caravan will no longer be available. If you can pay for the hotel rooms yourself, the money will be available to the collective for other purposes.

If you have any further questions about the festival and the state of preparation, feel free to write to us (25years@thecaravan.info) or call the following people:

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CARAVAN for the rights of refugees and migrants

25 Jahre | 25 years | 25 années

September 1 to 3, 2023 in Wuppertal

Registration: anmeldung@thecaravan.info

Overnight accommodation: schlafen@thecaravan.info

Press: presse@thecaravan.info

Internet: <http://thecaravan.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/caravannetwork/>

Donations:

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