

COMMÉMOR**ATION**



Refugees and migrants are forced to risk their lives crossing the sea, the desert or other border areas, because they cannot take safe routes due to restrictive visa regimes. In this context, tens of thousands of people have died and continue to die at the borders of the European Union.

Relatives of the victims, survivors and supporters established the transnational CommemorAction network in 2020. Families of victims of racist police and state violence have also joined the CommemorAction network. We remember those who have died and gone missing, we pay tribute to them, and we take action and protest against the conditions and policies responsible for these deaths.

In this booklet, we trace some of the key stages in the development of this transnational network. We present several accounts drawn from CommemorAction's transnational meetings organised over the past six years. We have also compiled a number of statements and testimonies from relatives who have lost loved ones and are now actively involved in the CommemorAction network.

We hope that this collection of texts and the numerous photographs will provide an insight into the CommemorAction process and offer an initial understanding of it. Of course, this small booklet remains fragmentary. It does not in any way claim to be exhaustive; it is merely an overview of the many activities and efforts undertaken to pay tribute to those who have died or gone missing and to take action against the deadly migration regime.

In solidarity with all those who have died or gone missing as a result of state violence along migration routes and in our neighbourhoods!



July 2026



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CONTRIBUTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMEMORATION NETWORK



'FROM GRIEF TO STRUGGLE, FROM REMEMBRANCE TO JUSTICE'

Ever since my brother Ramzi went missing at sea in 2011, the sea has ceased to be merely a border between two countries for me. It has become a place filled with unanswered questions. Since that day, my wait has turned into a struggle, not only for my brother, but also for all those who have gone missing and their families.

By joining the CommemorAction network, I met families who shared the same pain and the same hope. I realised that commemorating does not just mean remembering the missing, but also resisting oblivion, defending their dignity and demanding truth and justice.

I had the honour of organising the Zarzis gathering in 2022, a powerful event that brought together families, campaigners and organisations united by a shared conviction: no missing person should be reduced to a mere statistic, and no family should be left to fend for itself in its quest for truth.

I also took part in the Transborder Summer Camp, the commemorative tour in Cameroon, and the actions on 6 February. Each of these experiences reminded me that borders separate states, but they cannot separate our grief, our solidarity and our determination.

Throughout this journey, Alarm Phone has been a vital source of support for us. It is not just a network that responds to distress calls at sea. It is also a partner to the families, listening to our testimonies, amplifying our voices and helping us to transform our grief into a collective strength.

Today, our stories cross borders and remind the world that behind every missing person there is a family still waiting for the truth. I am convinced that remembrance is a form of resistance. Every commemoration is an act

of dignity and a rejection of indifference. We will continue to carry the names of our loved ones, to tell their stories and to demand truth, justice and accountability.

The sea may swallow up boats, but it will never erase our loved ones from our memories. Borders may try to silence our voices, but they will never silence the families. As long as there remains a mother, a father, a sister, a brother or a child waiting for an answer, our struggle will continue. Our memory is stronger than oblivion, and our hope for truth is stronger than any border.

Latifa Oualhazi Tunis, July 2026





'WE HAVE DECIDED TO UNITE AND FIGHT AGAINST BORDERS AND RACIST POLICE VIOLENCE'

Because of border closures and visa laws, many people of different ages, genders and nationalities are resorting to so-called 'illegal' migration. Many have managed to cross over and reach Europe, whilst many others have failed and disappeared at sea. That is when our struggle began, with broken hearts and tears in our eyes.

I am Mohamed Ben Smida, a Tunisian father who lost his son Aymen, a 17-year-old teenager full of joy and energy. His only 'crime' was to dream of going to Europe, without having a visa to do so legally. On 6 September 2012, the worst happened. My son did not survive. He left us in mourning, pain and grief. This is what the closure of borders and the visa system have put me – and all the families of those who have gone missing – through.

In 2014, I was fortunate enough to discover Alarm Phone and took part in a major demonstration in Europe called the March for Freedom of Movement, followed by numerous international demonstrations on migration, freedom of movement, against deadly borders, against the visa system, and in support of the involvement of the families of the missing.

The voices and stories of the families have resonated around the world. We have taken part in numerous demonstrations and organised many others against the visa system. We have led commemorations for the victims and the missing: the first commemoration in Oujda, Morocco, on 6 February, for the victims of Tarajal, which has now become a transnational day of remembrance; then on 6 September 2022 in Zarzis, Tunisia; and also in Cameroon, where we, the families of the missing, went to meet the families of the Tarajal victims. Although we share the same pain and the same tragedy, we were able to offer some comfort in their suffering.

During a workshop at the Transborder Summer Camp in August 2025, I met Awa, and we came together as families of people who had gone missing or died at borders and families of victims of racist police violence. During the

final plenary session of the Transborder Summer Camp, I, Mohamed, the father of a man who went missing at sea, and Awa, a Senegalese woman whose younger brother was shot dead by the police in Rennes, delivered a powerful and deeply moving statement. We decided to join forces and fight together against borders and racist police violence.

I am 60 years old. I began my fight against the closure of borders on 6 September 2012, the day I lost my son. For 14 years I have been fighting to uncover the truth and find out the fate of my son, as well as that of all the other missing people, and also to denounce the visa system and the closure of borders that kill. I am 60 years old, and I am still full of energy and strength to continue my struggle and my search.

Despite the sadness and grief, I will fight to the end in this struggle for freedom of movement.

Mohamed Ben Smida, Tunis, July 2026

Dakar, October 2024





'TODAY, MY BROTHER LIVES ON THROUGH OUR STRUGGLES'

The thread was severed in April 2024: my brother is no longer with us. It was Wednesday 17 April, the last time I spoke to him, just before he and his companions set out to cross the ocean. After that call, we endured more than a week of anguish, fear and sadness, clinging to the slightest sign of life, before learning that they had been shipwrecked off El Hierro, in the Canary Islands. All we received in response was the chilling image of a pirogue capsizing. That image only added to our anguish, our doubts and our endless questions.

It was in this way – the most brutal way imaginable – that my little brother, Mbaye Dieye, lost his life at sea. He set off with his best friend, Illimane, who had always been by his side. They did everything together in life, and the ocean took them both, leaving our mothers utterly devastated. My brother didn't set off on a whim; he set off to pursue his dreams. For him, football was everything. He saw the world only through the lens of a football and was simply looking for a bigger pitch, a better future to protect us from hardship. But the ocean swallowed up their hopes.

Ever since that day, grief and loneliness have taken hold, overwhelming, almost impossible to explain as they are beyond comprehension. It is a grief that consumes you from within, day after day. You never forget such a loss. I still find myself, almost mechanically, dialling his number on my phone, even though I know full well he won't be on the other end. Or my heart races the moment I see an international number appear on the screen, and I rush to pick up, hoping it's him, that he's calling to tell me he's alive, somewhere on this earth. When I get home, I still hope to find his belongings in every room, to discover a piece of clothing, an object, a sign, whilst the memories flood back.

The hardest thing to bear is the way other people look at you. Those people who tell you to be strong on the pretext that he's already gone. But the memories remain intact in our minds. We're asked to forget, but it's

impossible. It's exhausting always having to explain ourselves, having to justify why we miss him, why we're sad or why we feel like crying.

Mbaye was my little brother, my confidant, my other half. I miss his simplicity and kindness so much. And the hardest part is still those nights when he appears in my dreams. I wake up with the physical sensation of his presence, the sound of his voice still ringing in my ears, before falling abruptly back into the emptiness of reality.

It was to avoid sinking alone into this suffering that I eventually sought out a space to talk. I met Boza Fii at Alarm Phone's 10th-anniversary event, through COVES (Collectif des victimes de l'émigration au Sénégal), and it was during that event, in October 2024, that I discovered CommémorAction, on Mbao beach in Senegal. During that time, I was able to meet other people who were going through exactly the same situation as me. We came together as families to share our grief and honour the memory of our loved ones who had gone missing, without forgetting Latifa, who lost her brother; Feri and his brother; Mouhamed and his son; Aminata and her son; and so many others who are enduring this same ordeal.

CommémorAction has become our moment of sharing, our space to break the silence and denounce injustice. Because we must be clear about one thing: if our loved ones take such dangerous routes, it is because of precarious living conditions, poverty and intense social pressure.

They dream of a life of dignity, but they die because of disastrous migration policies and unequal agreements that drive thousands of young people to brave the storm. Together, we refuse to let their names fade into oblivion. Being able to talk about my brother, to share his passion for football with other mothers and sisters who share this longing, helps us to transform our immense sadness into a collective strength.

We have taken this strength out onto the streets, from our first steps in Mbao to the various rallies organised across Senegal to make our voices

heard. Just recently, the major commemoration on 6 February brought us together in Dakar, in the Apix neighbourhood. It was there that we lit candles, in a moment of incredible strength, filled with shared memories and the faces of our loved ones, whom we refuse to let become mere statistics.

This struggle has also taken us to Cameroon. It was there, during that shared CommémorAction, that I truly realised my misfortune was not an isolated tragedy. Somewhere across the continent, in Africa and around the world, other families are feeling exactly the same pain as I am. There, we met parents living in extreme poverty, isolated in their grief, with no one to confide in. Over a week of discussions and interviews, we listened to heart-wrenching stories, witnessed shattered lives and saw mothers broken with grief.

But amidst this distress, we were happy and proud to be there for them. Proud to be able to listen to them, comfort them, support them and let them know that we shared their grief because we, too, had been through it. We were able to show them just how much speaking out and talking about it can help them rebuild their lives.

For these parents in Cameroon, the situation is particularly difficult. Some blame themselves for the precarious circumstances in which they live – the daily hardship that drives their children to leave. By sharing our own experiences in Senegal – the stories of Mbaye, Illimane, Latifa and Aminata – we helped them to cast off this invisible burden. We told them that it is not the parents who are to blame, but rather the closed borders, inequalities and the lack of prospects for our young people.

We brought this journey to a close by gathering together for a grand moment of remembrance. On that day, borders vanished, giving way to a single family united by memory.

Today, my brother no longer rests solely in our regrets; he lives on through our struggles, alongside Latifa's brother, Feric's brother, Mohamed's son, Aminata's son and all the others. We will continue to march, to come together and to commemorate, so that their memories may light our paths and so that the ocean may never have the last word.

Ndeye Fall Dieye, Dakar, July 2026





'TURNING OUR GRIEF INTO JUSTICE'

6 February 2014 remains a date whose significance extends far beyond the brutal deaths and disappearances of dozens of migrants on Tarajal beach. This date marks the beginning of a long-term struggle for freedom of movement across the world.

This tragic event gave rise to the Collective of Families of Victims from Cameroon (SOSFAMIC), whose primary aim is to strengthen solidarity amongst families sharing the same grief and to work together to ensure that the truth is established and justice is done.

The CommémorActions organised every 6 February since 2014 are a powerful symbol which, beyond the victims' families, brings together campaigners, activists and volunteers from across the world, thereby strengthening solidarity around a project that aims to raise the profile of the struggle these families have been waging on a daily basis for over a decade.

This initiative, which has fostered a sense of unity among the victims' families from different countries, has led to the creation of a large transnational family, sharing the same pain and supporting one another. Thanks to this initiative, we had the immense pleasure of welcoming, in Douala in 2024, families of victims from Senegal and Tunisia, as well as activists from Senegal, Italy and Morocco.

This meeting between the families from Cameroon and those from these different countries was beneficial in several respects. It enabled the families to get to know one another and share their respective stories. It also helped to extend the network of families in Cameroon to another town, Édéa, where families of victims had not previously been identified.

We will continue to fight every day, on the one hand to ensure justice is done for the families whose dignity has been trampled upon, and on the

other hand to ensure that borders cease to be graveyards that destroy hope forever.

Feric Charden Datchoua, Douala, July 2026



"IN MEMORY OF OUR BROTHERS: every LIFE IS WORTH MORE THAN THEIR LAWS, THEIR WALLS AND THEIR WEAPONS!"

We are sisters who have lost loved ones to racist police crimes and who are co-founders of the "Truth and Justice Mutual Support Network".

This network, formally established in 2021, grew out of a series of meetings, dating back to 2007, between committees, victims' collectives and relatives of victims in France. We are fighting against police, prison, judicial and psychiatric violence, as part of a broader struggle: an anti-

repression, anti-authoritarian, anti-fascist, anti-prison and anti-imperialist struggle.

2025 was the first year in which the Truth and Justice Mutual Aid Network took part in CommémorAction. It was a time for tribute, remembrance, collective awareness and solidarity. This solidarity took concrete form during the meeting with various Alarm Phone groups, as well as with families and loved ones of people who have gone missing or died at the borders, at the Transborder Summer Camp in August 2025. We are advancing common demands across borders, in several countries, to demand truth, justice and reparations for the victims of deadly migration and security policies.

We denounce the violence of migration policies, just as we denounce the police, prison, psychiatric and judicial violence perpetrated within national borders. All stem from the same racist, xenophobic and colonial system.

Sadly, our brothers Babacar Gueye and Lamine Dieng did not survive this police state.

Babacar Gueye was 27 years old. He had left Senegal, travelling through several countries, to join his sister Awa in Rennes. But their reunion did not last long, as others had decided otherwise. After barely three years together, Babacar was killed by the Rennes police on the night of 2–3 December 2015. Babacar Gueye was in distress. He was staying with a friend that evening, who had called the fire brigade.

But that night, it was eight police officers, including four from the Anti-Crime Brigade (BAC), who responded. Babacar was shot five times. The emergency services, although present at the foot of the block from the start of the operation, were only able to intervene after Babacar had breathed his last, handcuffed and lying face down.

Lamine Dieng was 25 years old when he was suffocated on 17 June 2007 by a chokehold and a prone restraint carried out by several police officers in the 20th arrondissement of Paris, just a few metres from his family home. Lamine's parents said that it was not the way of things for a parent to bury their child. His mother said she would never have come to France if she had known that one of her children would die there at the hands of the police. Lamine Dieng, born in France, was of Franco-Senegalese origin.

Even though they had settled in France, Babacar and Lamine unfortunately did not escape these police crimes, like so many other non-white young men, whether or not they held European documents.

They are just two among the many victims who have been killed, gone missing or subjected to enforced disappearance. We will not forget them. We will not forgive!

Awa Gueye, Justice and Truth Collective for Babacar Gueye
Fatou Dieng, Truth and Justice Committee for Lamine Dieng



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COMMEMORATION



6-8 FEBRUARY 2020, OUJDA, MOROCCO

“Together we will fight against the borders that killed them and made them disappear!”

Families of missing persons from various countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Senegal, Niger, Guinea-Conakry, Cameroon and Mexico), representing a range of organisations (associations, committees and collectives), gathered in the city of Oujda alongside activists, lawyers, researchers and journalists. Oujda is a highly symbolic location, situated on the border between Morocco and Algeria, between the desert and the sea, and between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean.

In memory of the victims of Tarajal on 6 February 2014, this gathering brought together people who had lost a loved one, a family member or a friend at other borders, on land or at sea, in Europe or South America. Some had heard their loved ones' voices for the last time before their disappearance; others had gathered accounts of their disappearance from survivors.

It was in Oujda that the term ‘CommémorAction’ was coined, marking a new stage in transnational networking with the shared aim of contributing to the struggles for freedom of movement.

Report

<https://missingattheborders.org/en/news/2020/insieme-contro-le-frontiere-che-uccidono-e-fanno-scompare-vite-umane>



Oujda/Saïdia, February 2020



3-6 SEPTEMBER 2022, ZARZIS, TUNISIA

'Truth, justice, freedom of movement!'

Organised by the families of those who have died or gone missing, with the support of many supporters, a CommémorAction gathering was held in Zarzis in September 2022. Ten years earlier, on 6 September 2012, a boat carrying around 130 people from the Sfax region of Tunisia had capsized near the islet of Lampione, close to Lampedusa. Only 56 people had survived.

To mark the tenth anniversary of this tragedy, more than 100 people gathered in Zarzis: families from various African countries, local fishermen, members of Tunisian and international organisations, and activist networks.

After three days of workshops, the families led a powerful demonstration through the streets of Zarzis to the seafront and the harbour. Speeches were made, flowers were cast into the sea, and those who had gone missing and those who had died were collectively commemorated. The participants pledged to continue their joint struggle for truth, justice and freedom of movement, so that deaths at borders may come to an end.

[Report <https://civilmrcc.eu/commemoraction-in-zarzis/>](https://civilmrcc.eu/commemoraction-in-zarzis/)

Zarzis, September 2022





OCTOBER 2023, LAMPEDUSA

Never forget, never forgive!

On 11 October 2023, a CommémorAction was held near the port of Lampedusa to pay tribute to the victims of the major shipwrecks that occurred ten years earlier, whilst highlighting the responsibility of the European border regime for the deaths at sea that continue to this day.

During this transnational gathering, several speakers emphasised that, in the absence of safe passage routes, migrants have been killed by racist policies of migration control, deterrence and border externalisation. Photographs of the victims formed the backdrop to the ceremony, whilst an endless list (over 50 metres long), bearing the names of the known victims of the European Union's border regime since 1993, was unfurled along the pedestrianised street.

After a minute's silence, activists from Alarm Phone and Maldusa, accompanied by the solemn rhythms of drums played by members of the Senegalese Baye Fall community, read poems in Arabic and Italian by the Sudanese author Abdel Wahab Yousif Latino, who himself drowned off the coast of Libya in 2020 whilst attempting to cross the Mediterranean.

Report

<https://www.maldusa.org/l/lampedusa-commemoraction-11-october-2013-2023/>

Lampedusa, October 2023





11 OCTOBER 2024, MBao, Senegal

‘Migration is not a crime!’

Around 150 people gathered on the beach at Mbao, a small town on the Atlantic coast less than ten kilometres east of Dakar. Several Senegalese women took the floor to tell their stories or read poems. Even when they themselves had not lost loved ones during the crossing to the Canary Islands, they knew families in their neighbourhood who were mourning the loss of their loved ones. Several women held small paper boats in their hands, on which short messages had been written. This CommémorAction took place on 11 October 2024, the anniversary of a tragic shipwreck in the central Mediterranean, as part of an event organised to mark the tenth anniversary of the founding of WatchTheMed Alarm Phone.

The moving testimonies, tears and a minute’s silence on Mbao beach were followed by the laying of flowers and candles at the water’s edge. Several fishermen then steered their colourful pirogues close to the shore for a commemorative crossing aboard the same type of craft used to reach the Canary Islands. Once again, flowers were thrown into the sea, before a Senegalese friend paid a moving final tribute to those who had died and gone missing.

Report

<https://alarmphone.org/en/campaigns/ten-years-alarm-phone/>

Dakar, October 2024





2023-2026: CARAVANS IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE MISSING IN SENEGAL

‘Migration is a right!’

For several years now, we have been witnessing deaths, disappearances at borders and repeated shipwrecks in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. This tragedy affects West African countries in particular and has severe human, social and economic consequences for our continent.

Most of the victims are young people, driven by hope, who leave their countries in search of a better, more stable and safer life. Many lose their lives during these journeys, leaving behind distraught families seeking answers, and children facing an uncertain future. It is against this backdrop that Boza Fii regards these deaths and disappearances as forced deaths.

Our thoughts are with the thousands of migrants who have died or gone missing at sea and on land. To those who have braved the sea, the desert, barbed wire, walls and indifference, often at the cost of their lives.

We also think of all the migrants held in detention centres, and of those who have been abducted, exploited and abused in the Maghreb and elsewhere, silenced in places where humanity is denied.

In the face of injustice, we will not forget! In the face of suffering, we stand in solidarity! In the face of border violence, we affirm the right to migrate, to live and to exist with dignity! For those we have lost, for those who are still fighting: we are not alone, and we remind you that migration is a right.

Today, through our Commémor’Action initiative, we make a promise: never to forget those who have lost their lives and to fight against the borders that killed them.

This initiative, which is so important, should be marked on our calendar as a day of remembrance. It would allow the families of the missing to feel

recognised and supported. Unfortunately, in Senegal, this reality remains largely ignored or misunderstood by the public. Very few people speak positively about it, with the possible exception of Boza Fii and Alarm Phone Dakar.

These deaths and disappearances are all too often forgotten, whilst the families struggle to grieve in the absence of bodies and places where they can pay their respects. During our fourth caravan for the missing, in November 2024 in Kafountine, in southern Senegal, a local contact informed us of the existence of a mass grave where the victims of a shipwreck had been buried. The boat, which was carrying nearly 150 people to the Canary Islands, had caught fire before capsizing off the coast in June 2022. This is why we felt it necessary to develop this symbolic site to honour the memory of these women, men and children – fighters for freedom of movement – who set out never to return, whilst their families may still be waiting for them. This memorial is intended to pay tribute to all those who, faced with economic and social hardship, chose to migrate at the risk of their lives.

Since 2023, we have been developing the Commémor'Action initiative in Senegal, working in close collaboration with civil society organisations. In 2026, Boza Fii organised a decentralised Commémor'Action event with several associations: COVES (Collectif des victimes de l'émigration au Sénégal) on 6 February in Mbour, Boza Fii on 7 February at the Cité Apex in Tivaouane Peulh (Dakar), CMR2D (Collectif des Migrants de Retour pour la Réinsertion et le Développement) on 8 February in Pikine, and ASMF (Association pour la Solidarité des Migrants et des Familles Démunies) on 9 February in Mbao.

The aim is to have 6 February recognised as an international day for people who have gone missing at borders, in reference to the Tarajal massacre in 2014, when the Spanish Civil Guard fired rubber bullets to prevent migrants from reaching the Spanish coast.

We know that many people, like some of us, suffer in silence following the disappearance of a loved one. We consider it our duty and responsibility to offer them a space where they can express their grief. Through our awareness-raising activities, we hope to enable more families to take part in the Commémor'Actions. We would like to introduce them to this initiative so that they understand they are not alone and can finally speak out about a reality that destroys the lives of so many people.

Drawing on our own experience and that of the Boza Fii team along the migration routes, our aim today is to amplify the voices of those who have none – of all those who leave their countries and who, at times, die or disappear in silence. Each of us has a relative, a friend or knows someone who has been left behind in the desert, in the Mediterranean, in the Atlantic, or who has mysteriously disappeared along the migration routes. It is now time to seek answers and solutions together to this growing scourge.

Boza Fii

Senegal, November 2024





AUGUST 2025, TRANSBORDER SUMMER CAMP

‘Our struggles know no borders’

The third Transborder Summer Camp (TSC) took place from 5 to 10 August 2025, near Nantes, in France. Several hundred activists gathered there for a period of transnational exchange and mutual inspiration, focusing on struggles and practices in support of freedom of movement and against deadly border regimes, state violence and racism.

From the very start of the camp, photographs of people who had died or gone missing at borders, as well as portraits of victims of racist police violence, were displayed at the centre of the camp, at the very heart of our movement. Throughout the gathering, the relatives of those who have gone missing and bereaved families took centre stage, speaking during workshops, plenary sessions and the collective Commémor’Action ceremony, where their voices and their demands for truth and justice were brought to the fore.

Transborder Summer Camp brochure: <https://transborder.net/index.php/new-bochure-transborder-summer-camp-iii>

Video of the Commémor’Action event during the Transborder Summer Camp (August 2025): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWxy4XVGUhg>





REMEMBERING EUROPE'S DEADLY BORDERS

**‘Tear down the borders that killed them and build a different Europe,
a welcoming Europe’**

Along the border between Greece and Turkey, from the River Evros to the islands of the Aegean Sea, thousands of people have lost their lives over the years. The dead become mere statistics, often anonymous. The only people who truly know who they are mourning are their families and loved ones — if they ever manage to find out what has become of them.

In 2010, the first memorial was erected on the island of Lesbos, in Korakas, at the spot where, a year earlier, a boat had crashed against the rocks. Two Afghan mothers and their six young children had lost their lives there. The following year, we returned to the site with a family who had survived the shipwreck to build a memorial and visit the fisherman who had saved their child from drowning.

Over the years, we have continued to meet people searching for a missing loved one — and for answers. There have been so many encounters, so many stories.

In 2011, the search for the husband of an Afghan woman in the Evros region, on the land border between Greece and Turkey, led us to a mass grave. We then discovered that people found dead who could not be identified were sometimes buried without dignity, without a name or an identifiable grave, making any subsequent identification almost impossible for their families.

From 2013 onwards, working with the Welcome to Europe network, we began travelling the migration routes alongside people who had crossed the border and found refuge in Europe, in order to welcome new arrivals whilst ensuring we never forget those who never made it.

Years later, we supported families still searching for their loved ones who went missing after the sinking of *the Adriana*, which occurred at dawn on

14 June 2023 off the coast of Pylos. More than 600 people lost their lives in full view of the Greek coastguard — a state crime. As one member of a bereaved family told us:

‘This shipwreck did not just cost lives; it left families suspended between grief and hope. Many still have no answers, no bodies to bury, no truth to cling to. The sea swallowed up their loved ones, but the silence that followed continues to wound those left behind.

That is why remembrance is essential. Not only to mourn the dead, but also to support the living who bear this burden every day... To remember is to resist the trivialisation of a border regime that treats human lives as disposable. To remember is to demand truth, accountability and justice.”

Each memorial carries the same promise: to tear down the borders that killed them and to build a different Europe – a welcoming Europe!

Video (in French and English) about the memorials:

<https://lesvos.w2eu.net/2021/02/04/w2eu-memorials-2009-till-2021/>

Alarm Phone on the Pylos shipwreck:

<https://alarmphone.org/en/2024/06/13/the-pylos-massacre-one-year-on/>

Thermi, Lesbos, September 2019





COMMÉMORATION IN CALAIS

‘Stop the deaths in the English Channel!’

Borders kill, even in northern Europe. Ever since the UK established its border controls on French soil in the early 1990s, people have been forced to risk their lives to cross the English Channel in search of safety. Since 1999, at least 528 people have been recorded as dead or missing whilst attempting to reach the UK. Many others are still missing.

In recent years, the border has become increasingly deadly. As control measures have been stepped up around ports, the Channel Tunnel and lorry parks, migrants have gradually been forced to attempt the crossing in small inflatable boats. The death toll has risen as more police forces have been deployed in northern France to prevent crossings, operations funded by the British government.

In Calais, every death at the border is marked by a CommémorAction. On the evening following the media announcement of a border-related death, a vigil is organised in Richelieu Park. Those who gather there include local activists, affected residents, volunteers from charities, people involved in supporting exiles, as well as the friends and relatives of the person who died at the border.

Sometimes, the person was known within the community and, after a minute’s silence, tributes, memories and tears are shared amongst those present. At other times, very little is known, sometimes not even their name. Yet voices are raised: *‘How many more must we lose before these walls come down?’*, *“Down with the border and its apartheid policy!”*

Gathering together, and continuing to gather for every death, is a way of rejecting indifference. It is a way of never forgetting and of refusing to accept the normalisation of deaths caused by borders.

Deaths at the Border – Calais Migrant Solidarity

<https://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/deaths-at-the-calais-border/>

The Missing in the English Channel – On the Move

<https://onthemovemedias.org/les-disparus-de-la-manche/>

How ‘Stopping the Boats’ Kills – Border Forensics

<https://www.borderforensics.org/investigations/channel/>





FEBRUARY 2026, MAMOU, GUINEA-CONAKRY

‘Turning pain into collective strength’

From 3 to 10 February 2026, the city of Mamou, in Guinea, hosted the second edition of CommémorAction, an event dedicated to the memory of those who have gone missing, died or been victimised along migration routes. Over the course of a week, families of missing persons, civil society organisations, local authorities and members of the public came together for moments of reflection, public debates, an official ceremony and a commemorative football match.

This second edition provided support for 23 families (15 from Mamou and 8 from Conakry and Kindia) and mobilised a large number of people. Beyond the commemoration, the event offered a space for listening, solidarity and recognition for families affected by the disappearance of their loved ones.

This initiative forms an integral part of the Alarm Phone transnational network. As a member of this network, we work to strengthen links between communities of origin in Guinea and solidarity groups in Morocco, as well as along migration routes. We support families in their searches and in the processes of identification, burial or repatriation of the deceased where possible, whilst amplifying their voices in international advocacy forums.

CommémorAction has thus become a bridge between remembrance, solidarity and justice, transcending borders.

Mamou, February 2026





JUNE 2026, CANARY ISLANDS

‘Long live freedom of movement!’

From 15 to 22 June 2026, a delegation spent a week in the Canary Islands, taking part in meetings and commemorations in Lanzarote, El Hierro and Tenerife to honour the memory of those who have gone missing, alongside their families and activist communities.

The delegation invited Ibrahima, who lost his niece in the shipwreck of 17 June 2021 off the coast of Lanzarote, in which five people lost their lives, including his niece. Their presence on the islands was particularly significant, as this visit was eagerly anticipated, not least because many migration routes from the African continent lead to the Canary Islands.

For the families, arriving on these islands and seeing the places where their loved ones were buried or went missing was a deeply moving experience. Local organisations carry out vital work, but one of their main difficulties is that they often have no contact with the families of the missing. The work carried out through the network helps to honour the memory of those who have gone missing during their migration journeys and to ensure that their stories are not forgotten.

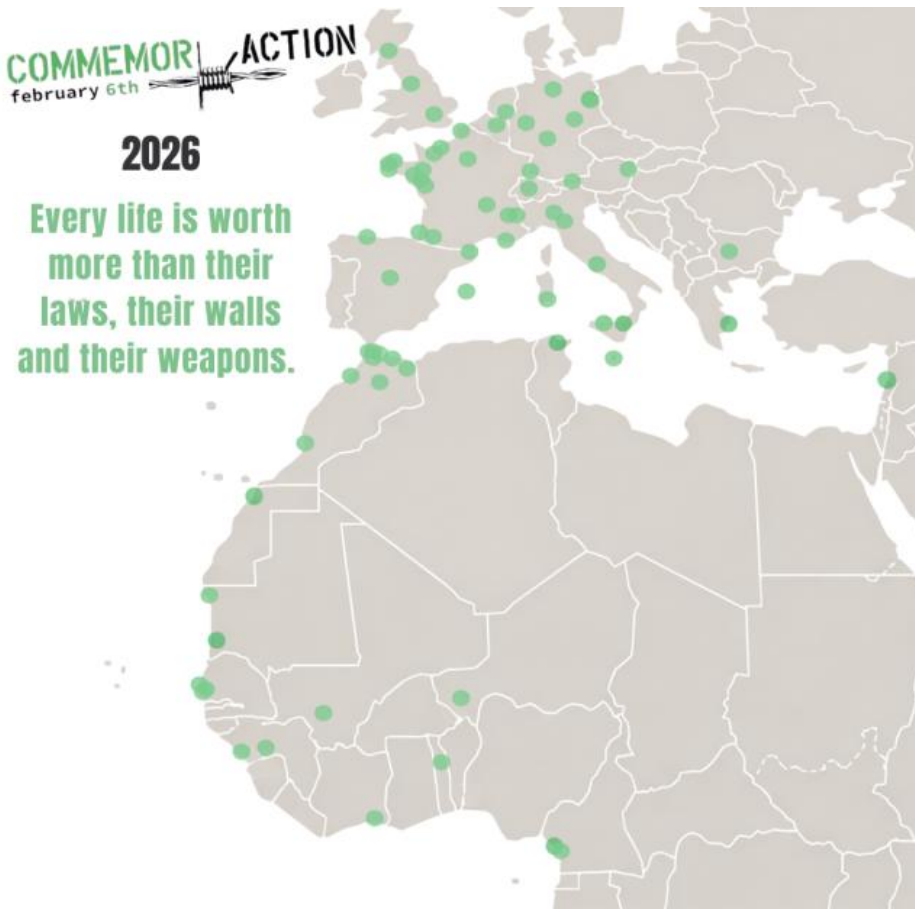
These were powerful moments shared with families, loved ones and those who came to take part in the commemorations. The delegation’s presence was essential, as the European policy of externalising borders has caused thousands of deaths, particularly on the Atlantic route. The Canary Islands have become a major point of arrival for people leaving West Africa, and the consequences of these policies are visible there every day.

The families present are also engaged in a vital struggle to denounce these deadly policies. Through this work, action groups have been supported and strengthened, enabling families to come together, make their voices heard and demand truth and justice.

The delegation continues to shine a light on the victims of European border control policies: remembering and taking action. With the support of the Transnational Network, which has been involved in this struggle for nearly ten years and will continue its work, efforts are ongoing to accompany and support the families of the missing.



MAP OF COMMEMORATIONS ON 6 FEBRUARY 2026



Cities in which **Commémor'Actions** are organised in February 2026

Agadir, Athènes, Bamako, Bayonne, Berkane, Berlin, Bern, Blain, Briançon, Brest, Bruxelles, Caen, Cagliari, Calais, Ceuta, Cité Apix, Cologne, Conakry, Dakar, Douala, Douarnenez, Edea, Fès, Francfort, Freiburg, Gijón, Glasgow, Grand Bassam, Grenoble, Hambourg, Innsbruck, Laayoune, Leipzig, Le Havre, Londres, Madrid, Manchester, Mamou, Marseille, Martil, Mbao, Mbour, Messina, Milan, Morlaix, Nantes, Nador, Niamey, Nijmegen, Nouadhibou, Nouakchott, Oujda, Palermo, Palma de Mallorca, Paris, Parme, Portbou, Pikine, Rabat, Redon, Rennes, Roma, Saint-Étienne, Saint-Palais, Sokodé, Sofia, Taouyah, Tanger, Tétouan, Tripoli (Liban), Tunis, La Valette, Vienne.

LINKS AND WEBSITES

CommemorAction: <https://commemoraction.net/>

Missing at Borders: <https://missingattheborders.org/>

MemMed: <https://memoriamediterranea.org/>

Civil MRCC / Civilfleet: <https://civilmrcc.eu/category/forced-to-disappear/>



Nouakchott, February 2024



"COMMEMORACTION" IS A BLENDED WORD
ENCOMPASSING BOTH COMMEMORATION AND ACTION.

IT EMPHASIZES BOTH OUR COMMITMENT TO
REMEMBERING THOSE WHO DIED OR DISAPPEARED IN
THEIR PURSUIT OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND OUR
DEMANDS FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

