

Missing at the borders

People not numbers

DIGNITY, TRUTH AND JUSTICE for the deceased migrants and those who disappeared at the borders!

Year after year, we find ourselves helpless witnesses to ghastly body counts alongside the borders of our world. As of the late eighties to-date, and in the Mediterranean area alone, more than 35000 people have been reported dead or missing in their attempt to reach European shores¹.

These figures tell the unbearable human tragedy of those who fell victims of ever more impermeable borders and more impregnable walls erected by the wealthy North, in order to hamper human mobility.

These figures speak for themselves. They paint the harrowing reality experienced by the victims of migration policies that veto their fundamental right to asylum, as enshrined in Art 13 of the Universal Declaration of human rights.

These people have lost their lives or gone missing when undertaking incredibly perilous journeys simply because they claimed their right of crossing borders and had no choice to do otherwise since visas, granting them the right to travel with dignity, had been denied.

Portrayed by both media and decision makers as mere objects or disincarnated statistics, we should never forget that they were, above all, HUMAN BEINGS.

We should never forget that behind these figures are PEOPLE who carried a name, had a family, a story that prompted them to leave their homeland and seek a second chance for peace, work and a new beginning abroad.

PEOPLE whose families we tend to obliterate and leave behind... even though we know that for each and every one of them, distraught mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, siblings and other next of kin await news that may never ever come.

Entire FAMILIES living in the agony of the disappearance of their loved ones, sometimes safely landed on the much-coveted European shores and then gone missing without a trace.

FAMILIES who possess evidence that their loved ones have forcibly disappeared and illegally detained in some of the hundred detention centres for migrants built in the southern Med countries, with the political blessing and financial support of the EU.

FAMILIES who have had to pay out huge amounts of money in a bid to free their loved ones from the torture inflicted by heartless people smugglers.

FAMILIES who harbour a near certainty that their loved ones have passed away yet remain haunted by the anguish of not knowing the whereabouts of their remains and the circumstances surrounding their deaths. Families who endure the pains of an impossible mourning process in the absence of the body of their loved one, depriving them thus of the possibility to provide for a dignifying burial.

FAMILIES who demanded that justice be done and that both incriminated military and police forces be held accountable for the death of their loved one but instead have seen their complaint files closed.

FAMILIES who have -against all odds- decided that their missing or deceased relative is but a pure bout of bad luck.

FAMILIES who demand answers on behalf of those who keep erecting walls and keep behaving with ever mounting violence and shocking impunity along the borders.

FAMILIES who hold to account those who obstruct the possibility of obtaining regular entry permits, thereby pushing their loved ones to risk their lives in order to get to their destination.

FAMILIES calling on Europe to stop externalising border surveillance and onto the Southern Med countries to stop acting in cahoots with the murderous EU agenda. FAMILIES who claim that it is in the complicit behaviour of the two parties that lies the actual root cause for the billion deaths and missing cases scattering migration routes.

FAMILIES who have decided they will no longer be silenced, demanding DIGNITY, TRUTH AND JUSTICE!

It is for this very reason, that activists and militants from organisations on both shores of the Mediterranean sea have joined forces with families of deceased or missing migrants who have sought to make it to Europe. Jointly, they set up this online platform to tell the stories of both the missing and the deceased and to give voice to all of us who want dignity, truth and justice for these families.

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Est un projet qui veut faire entendre les familles, pour qu'elles restituent une visibilité aux disparus. La page web accueillera les témoignages vidéo des proches pour donner une identité concrète aux migrants et pour répandre la demande de vérité et justice de leurs proches.

MISSING AT THE BORDERS est un projet à l'initiative de :

Association des Travailleurs Maghrébins de France, Milano sans Frontières, Palermo sans Frontières, Como sans Frontières, Carovane Migranti, Alarmphone et Watch the Med.

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<https://alarmphone.org/fr> / <http://www.atmf.org>

¹ OIM - <http://gmdac.iom.int/map-tracking-migrant-deaths-and-disappearances>