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Short Report about the Northern German Demonstration on the 7th of October in Hamburg

On the transnational day of migration-related actions, about 6-700 people from Northern Germany, among them many refugees, demonstrated in Hamburg for freedom of movement, against camps and deportations, for the right to stay and equal rights for all. Although it was raining cats and dogs, people were in high spirits. This was due to suitable music from the truck with loudspeakers and informations about a new global passport, which was available on the demonstration, and also to several speeches, telling about struggles here and elsewhere.

In the opening speech, it was explained how it came to this transnational day of action, which was adopted on the European Social Forum in May 2006 and signed by more than 200 groups from all over Europe and Africa. Actions took place in nine German towns, eight European and four African countries. Resistance against the European migration policies, also in Africa, was made public and relations to the situation in Hamburg were underlined.

After this, refugees from the camp Blankenburg near Oldenburg reported about their strike, which they are organizing since the 4th of October against the inhuman conditions there. They called for support for their demand for better food, medical treatment and an end of the harassments by the staff of the camp. In general they demand an end of the policies of isolation, which means of the forced accomodation in camps, and instead of this the right to live in normal houses.

Later a woman from Afghanistan told about her situation as a refugee, threatened by deportation. An organisation of Iranian refugees demanded different policies of migration and external affairs. Another speaker asked how Germany would look like, if there would be a legalisation of all undocumented people, free health care for all and no deportations, and if there were no fences around Europe - a utopia, which we wish to become true!

In front of a prison, which is also being used as deportation prison, the Hamburg policies of exclusion and deportation were explained and especially the transfer of the "reception center" for refugees from Hamburg to Nostorf/Horst, a camp in the forest in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and the new central data base to register school children and by this identify undocumented people, were criticized.

In the end, refugees from Togo demanded a stop of deportation to this country, which is still ruled by a family clan dictatorship. The Caravan for the Rights of Refugees presented herself. People called for a demonstration on the 16th of November in Nuernberg, where the conference of the interior ministers of Germany will take place, in order to demand an unconditional right to stay and papers for all.

Almost exactly at the end of the demonstration, when the participants went into a cultural center to get some food, the rain stopped and the sun came out - a sign of hope and of new perspectives, which were opened by this transnational day of action?

You find the call for the Hamburg demonstration and more information about it as well as about actions in other towns and countries, tomorrow also some of the speeches, on www.fluechtlingsrat-hamburg.de and www.noborder.org
