

## Press release: “No. 9 – Stop violence at the borders!” Campaign Launch

2013 – 06 – 25 – **UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL Friday 28th June at 5.30pm**

In memory of Clément, who passed away as a result of wounds inflicted during an unparalleled repression by Spanish and Moroccan forces.

**Repression against migrants has not ceased since the autumn 2005 Sebta and Melilla events, and violence at the borders in the north of Morocco is on the increase since late 2011.**

The associations ALECMA<sup>1</sup>, GADEM<sup>2</sup>, FMAS<sup>3</sup> and AMDH<sup>4</sup> call for mobilisation and unveil a campaign to denounce and bring an end to violence at the northern borders of Morocco. This campaign will be launched on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June at 5.30pm in the head office of AMDH (avenue Hassan II - rue Aguenous immeuble 6 appartement 1 - Rabat).

On 11th March 2013, a collective attempt at crossing the border between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Melilla is violently contained by the Spanish ‘guardia civil’ and the Moroccan ‘forces auxiliaires’.

On 16th March, the association ALECMA leads a field mission supported by GADEM and accompanied by filmmaker Sara Creta in the forest of Gourougou near Beni Enssar. The aim was to document the consequences of police violence against migrants and to gather written and audio-visual accounts. On site, they witness the death of Clément, from Cameroun, who had attempted the crossing of the Melilla fence on 11<sup>th</sup> March. He had been arrested, beaten up and transferred to the hospital in Nador. According to AMDH, he had suffered a head wound and had an arm and a leg broken. As stated in testimonies gathered, although still very weak Clément was sent back to the camp in the Gourougou forest where he died from his wounds.

This field mission led to the making of the film “No. 9”<sup>5</sup> and the launch of the “No. 9 – Stop violence at the borders!” campaign to denounce the daily and systematic repression of migrants by Moroccan authorities as well as the implication of Spanish authorities in the crimes perpetrated against migrants at the borders of Melilla; to call for the end of violence and violations of human rights in the north of Morocco; and to demand an official investigation into the circumstances of the death of Clément and the other migrants deceased in the surroundings of the enclaves.

The premiere of the “No. 9” film as well as the presentation of the objectives, actions and other tools of the campaign will occur during the 28<sup>th</sup> June press conference.

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<sup>1</sup> Association lumière sur l’émigration clandestine au Maghreb (Association Shedding Light on Clandestine Migration in Maghreb (an association of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco))

<sup>2</sup> Groupe antiraciste d’accompagnement et de défense des étrangers et migrants (Anti-racist group of support and defence of foreigners and migrants)

<sup>3</sup> Forum des alternatives Maroc (Alternatives Forum Morocco)

<sup>4</sup> Association marocaine des droits de l’Homme (Moroccan Association of Human Rights)

<sup>5</sup> 15-minutes film, as well as shorter version (3-4 minutes) available at <http://saracreta.wix.com/into-the-forest>.

“No. 9” recalls the player with the number 9 shirt on football pitches: the centre-forward or striker who needs to score goals. “No. 9” is a nickname amongst migrants to talk about the one who leaves both his family and country and attempts the ‘passage’, here the border between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Melilla embodied by parallel fences with a length of 12km, a height of 6 metres, topped-up with razor-wire fences and integrated into a heavy system of surveillance on both Moroccan and Spanish sides.