



# Initiative in Gedenken an Oury Jalloh

**Wahrheit, Gerechtigkeit, Entschädigung!**

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**To the public**

**To the press**

**To the citizens of Dessau**

**5. Januar 2009**

*"My resentments are there so that the crime  
becomes moral reality for the criminal, so that  
he be forced into the truth of his crime."*

*Jean Améry, Holocaust survivor*

## **IN MEMORY OF OURY JALLOH – FOR TRUTH AND JUSTICE**

- **Demonstration on January 7, 2009, in commemoration of the fourth anniversary of Oury Jalloh's death**
- **The police apparently plan new provocations and attacks against the demonstration**
- **A call for vigilance and Monitoring**

7th January 2009 at 12 O'clock: Press Conference of the Initiative in Memory of Oury Jalloh.

Place: Multikulturelles Zentrum Dessau e.V. Parkstr. 7, 06846 Dessau

On January 7, 2009, for the fourth anniversary of Oury Jalloh's murder, family, friends and other people of solidarity who do not tolerate racist murders and the legal exclusion of human beings are mobilizing to Dessau.

We are coming to Dessau in remembrance of the victims of racist state-executed violence. We are coming to Dessau in the name of justice. We shall come to Dessau in defense of the truth. We say, "It was murder!" and continue to name and denounce those responsible. Our weapons are our words and our presence. Our aim is the end of racist police attacks.

Four years ago, on January 7, 2005, Oury Jalloh was the victim of a racially motivated crime. Oury Jalloh burned to death while chained at his hands and feet to a fireproof mattress in an empty holding cell at the police station in Dessau. Like his detention itself and the abuses suffered by Oury Jalloh while in detention, the entire circumstances surrounding his death were racially motivated. What happened thereafter was also racist: no serious investigation was ever carried out and the only line ever put forth involved the lies constructed by the police and other state officials to protect the victimizers: Oury Jalloh killed himself. But our voices, the voices of Oury's family, friends and an international public continuously managed to break the silence and unmask the lies intended to conceal the crime committed on that January 7, 2005.

### **Oury Jalloh – It was murder!**

Our voice continuously obliged the state, which has developed a highly polished system of discrimination, terror and defamation of refugees and migrants, to at least give the appearance of responding to our demand for truth. A show trial, which lasted almost as long as it took to even finally open proceedings in the first place, was staged two years after Oury Jalloh's death. On each and every 60 days of proceedings, metal detectors and photocopies of activists' passports were used in the attempt to intimidate those of us who attended the trial as court observers. It was a lavish piece of theatre with up to 70 police witnesses who, in spite of constant witness counseling and psychological support, consistently outdid each other in terms of their lies and contradictions.

"Lost" pieces of evidence and several failed attempts to reconstruct the fire demonstrated the untenability and absurdity of the suicide thesis. Nevertheless, the proceedings were brought to an end and the two police officers on trial were acquitted of all charges.

**The German state is a state that puts racism into law and promotes it in society, protects the state-appointed victimizers, conceals racist crimes and attempts to silence the voice of the victim.**

The authorities presented this message to us already on the day of the acquittal: the police continuously hassled the protestors, provoked us with the illegal filming of our demonstration and forced us to stop on several occasions. In spite of the fact that we remained calm, such provocations persisted during the entire demonstration.

Yet they have already demonstrated their plans to attack us yet again during the demonstration in commemoration of the fourth anniversary of Oury Jalloh's murder. Both the behavior of the police on the day of the acquittal as well as an unusually long and in part nonsensical catalogue of restrictions for the demonstration lead us to this conclusion.

In its catalogue of restrictions, the Office for Public Order and Traffic of the city of Dessau-Roßlau wrote: "*In issuing the restrictions, it shall be taken to your disfavor that—as experience shows—violence-oriented persons and groups participate in the demonstrations you register whom you are incapable of controlling.*"

Alone the motivation for our demonstration belies this statement; it is precisely the apparatus of the state which is responsible for state-violence that categorizes the very people who travel to Dessau to protest against that violence and who struggle for a society free from violence as violent. And without even providing any concrete reason or evidence.

**We hereby request that the general public, the press and the citizens of Dessau be present as observers in the hope that we can thus avoid violence on the part of the authorities.**

Alongside other attempts at intimidation, the Office for Public Order and Traffic also made known the following: "*As a matter of precaution, we are hereby informing you that participants who possess an Aufenthaltsgestattung (permission to remain) or a Duldung (permission to remain until deported) will require the authorization of the respective immigration authorities in order to leave their assigned districts.*"

Meant here is the so-called *Residenzpflicht*, or the Residence Obligation Law. This law determines that refugees may only physically remain in the district to which they have been assigned by the authorities. This is why *Residenzpflicht* has been called the German Apartheid law. It is unique in all of Europe. Refugees must apply for permission from the immigration authorities in order to leave their assigned district at any time, even if it is only a question of five meters. There are no comprehensible rules as to when permission should be given. In this manner, the bureaucrats of the so-called Foreigners' Office, which are generally integrated into the Office for Public Order, are allowed to do and act as they please. As a result, our actions, our meetings and our cultural happenings are always an act of resistance against the *Residenzpflicht*. There is only one solution to this abhorrent law: the complete abolition of the mutilation of the right to freedom of movement.

**We are hereby reinforcing our call for participation in the demonstration to be held on January 7, 2009, in Dessau as well as increased attention, immediate support and, if necessary, urgent actions.**

We call on all self-organized refugee and migrant organizations, anti-racist groups and human rights associations to show their solidarity and participate in the activities in Dessau. On the fourth anniversary of Oury Jalloh's death we will also remember other victims of racist police violence. Among others, we will pay our tributes to Laye Kondé and Dominique Koumadio. Both lost their lives at the hands of the police. Our experience with their deaths was the same as that which we saw in the case of Oury Jalloh: intentionally slipshod investigations, intimidation of the family and supporters, acquittal of the accused as well as the concealment of the truth and the suppression of the causes of the crime.

Finally, we also request support for the development of an independent commission to investigate the causes of

death of Oury Jalloh as well as the concealment of the truth on the part of the police.

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