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DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

THE FRENCH LESSON OF THE MONTH

Loon-Plage, 1st January 2026, heard in the queue for portions of fries (see below):

How do you say "Happy New Year" in French?

Do you know how to say "banana" said Cheng?

Yes!

Well, you say "Banana".

Try it, you'll see, it works! (in French "Banana" is phonetically close to "Bonne Année")

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

2024 was a very difficult year with the death of our President Jean-Claude LENOIR.

The year 2025, for its part, has allowed us to rebuild ourselves, to take up the challenge despite this loss and to put the great association that Salam has become back on track.

The number of exiles has not decreased.

We have deplored a little fewer deaths than in 2024, but it is still too many, of course.

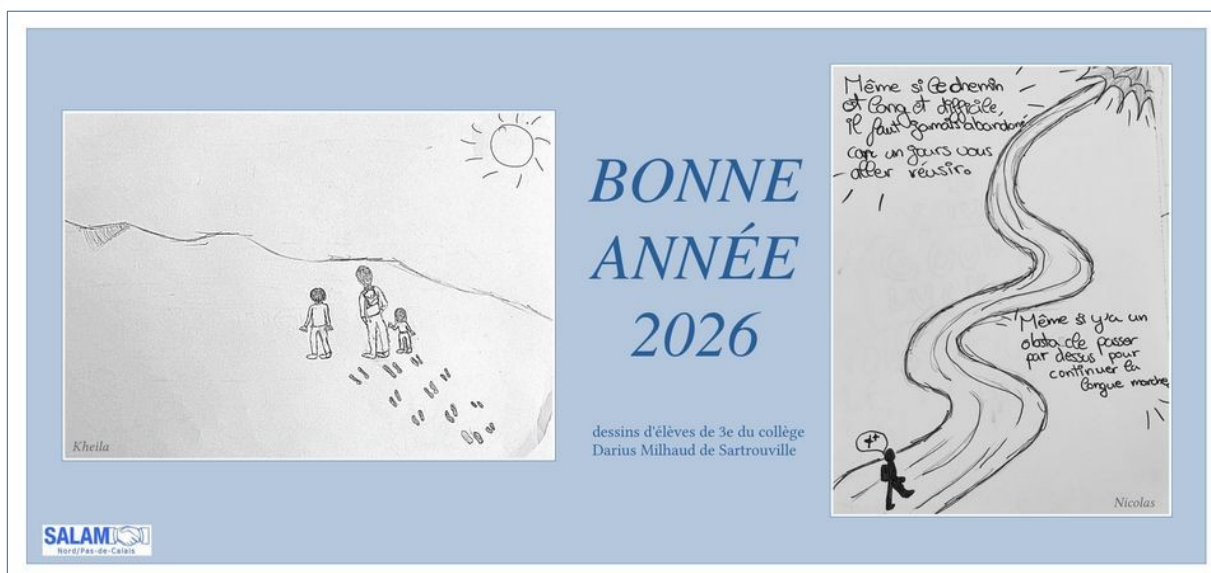
With the increasing number of attempts by sea, the risks have increased in recent years.

I would like to thank the teams who help us on a daily basis, the members and benefactors who allow us to continue our fight.

As long as the exiles are there, rest assured that SALAM will always be by their side!

Happy New Year 2026 to all.

Yolaine BERNARD.



THE WORDS OF PATRICK FREYSS, President of our sister association, FTS.

First of all, I would like to thank in particular all the people who, for all these years, with more or less presence, each in his or her place, at his or her own pace, in a discreet way, have worked to restore to these men, women, children and teenagers a dignity lost on the roads of exile.

As I say every time, we are a chance meeting on their way to a so-called better future elsewhere, this elsewhere which is 33 km on the other side of the sea that is the Channel. And at the risk of their lives, they cross it on boats provided by mafia men and unscrupulous devoid of any humanity.

Patrick Freyss, president of Flanders Terre Solidaire.

These are the first words of his introductory speech at the General Assembly of the association, on 12th December 2025.

LITTLE WORDS OF THE END OF THE YEAR

For many years I have been part of Salam with great pride.
The work done there by Salam EVERY MORNING is considerable and very necessary.
Breakfast is awaited by the refugees!
The work of the many volunteers is considerable.
And" Mummy Moss*" Yolaine! does a job as a person does.
Your donations are necessary and welcome!

* "MOSS" means "banana" in Sudanese Arabic.

Ferri Matheeuwsen
(Ferri, volunteer in Salam is Dutch)

EVENTS OF THE MONTH

LAST MINUTE: a death of an exile on 31ST December, in the street, in Calais. The commemorations took place on 2nd January in Calais and Dunkirk.

VICTORY AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

If it hadn't been for this last-minute death, for once this article would open with positive information: We announced it in the "latest news" last month.

On 4th December, we won at the Administrative Court improvements that had never been achieved before in the Dunkirk sector: mainly toilets and a shower access service.

Here is the summary made by Diane Léon of "Doctors of the World" on 16th December on behalf of all the applicant associations, including Salam, and validated by them.

As you know, the State, the Urban Community of Dunkirk, the Dunkirk Water Syndicate and the municipalities of Dunkirk and Loon-Plage were condemned on 04/12/2025 by the TA of Lille to improve the living conditions of exiled people.

The applicant associations (Human Rights Observers, Roots, Refuge Women's Centre, Salam, Utopia 56 and Doctors of the World) as well as Solidarités International and the Red Cross were invited last Friday by the sub-prefecture to present to us what will happen in concrete terms:

- Water containers: the CUD has ordered jerry cans, a "massive" distribution of 1,200 jerry cans will be made on 20/12 then a partial renewal will be organized each month of 500 jerry cans + a small emergency stock will be given to the associations.
- Showers: shuttles will be set up to provide showers in CUD gymnasiums by an operator - implemented in January.
- Toilets: 10 to 20 toilets will be installed in front of Distro (once the shops land is terraced Δ , the earthworks of the land will imply that the shops will be moved, which will certainly change the dynamics... in total an area of 3500m² should be developed) - implementation 19/12, work from today - in the long term (waiting for material reception), 60 gendered and PRM booths will be installed
- Waste: collections have begun and a second skip will be installed at the second water point after earthworks - implementation 20/12
- Unaccompanied minors: Afeji reinforced by 3 people dedicated to information on rights and shelter in cooperation with the departmental council. Fixed point under a tent in the morning and patrolling in the afternoon from Monday to Friday and dedicated telephone line on weekends

The condemned authorities played the game.

We had to stabilize the ground,

Then the first toilets arrived on Thursday 18th (eleven for men, eleven for women, all with urinals and two rolls of toilet paper).



The first jerry cans were distributed on Saturday 20th by AFEJL.

Salam, MDM, the Womens Center each received 100 to donate as emergency services (jerry cans to be replaced or for new arrivals).

The organization of the pipes to the showers is being done little by little:the Womens Center sent us on December 29th a message from the Director General of Services of the CUD who informed them that the AFEJI was going to take charge of the management of the showers from the 30th at 10 a.m. A consultation is planned after the holidays with the associations to benefit from their experience in this field.

The applicant associations are appealing to the Council of State, at least

- against the systematic seizure of tents during dismantling,
- for the participation of the State in the preparation and distribution of meals,
- for a sufficient number of shelter places for all those who request it.

The hearing is set for January 8th.

THE OTHER LITIGATION IN WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED:

The appeal against the United Kingdom/France agreement (known as "1 in 1 out").

The hearing at the Council of State took place on 10th December. It was preceded by numerous exchanges between lawyers, very technical, incomprehensible to most of us.

The Council of State rejects our request... The decision was communicated to us on December 30th.

Reminder:

An appeal had been filed on October 10th by sixteen associations, including Salam.

This is a "summary suspension": an emergency procedure filed directly with the Council of State (therefore processed in about a month) that is initiated when a law should have been voted by Parliament in order to be applied.

It was our lawyers who chose to go through this purely legal angle, which seemed to them to be more effective in an emergency than the humanitarian aspects that had immediately shocked us extremely much.

At the hearing, the public rapporteur concluded that the request we presented to obtain the annulment of the decree should be rejected.

The Council usually follows the conclusions of its public rapporteur, and this is what happened.

We had to wait for the decision a fortnight, but it fell in the middle of Christmas...

In any case, it is still difficult to know how many people are being sent back to France under this agreement and how many are legally accepted in the United Kingdom.

We cling at random to the information given by the press:

An article in the "Guardian" of December 2nd said:

"Even before the most recent measures were adopted, this program had raised serious concerns about the controversies. The right considered him ineffective, with only 113 returns to France and 84 asylum seekers allowed to make the opposite journey. For Friday alone [14th November], 217 people made the crossing to England, twice the number of number of individuals removed to date in a single day. Rights defenders denounce an excessively harsh program and arbitrary decisions concerning the choice of who can stay or not. »

(see the full text on our website of the same day, www.associationsalam.org).

Then, on 8th December, we hear on the evening news of France 2 that, since the signing in July, 173 people have been sent back to France and 157 allowed to enter the United Kingdom.

This is a number that remains derisory: on 20th December, the Home Office announced 803 arrivals in small boats on that day alone...

In an article in the newspaper "Le Monde" on 11th December, Julia Pascual wrote: "In a letter dating from mid-November and revealed by *Le Monde*, the British Prime Minister, the Labour Keir Starmer, intended to put pressure on the French head of state, Emmanuel Macron, to speed up the pace. He wanted "*a minimum of 250 people per week*" to be sent back to France.

We are far from that...

THE PASSAGES, PRECISELY, LET'S TALK ABOUT THEM...

The good news again: "a month of December without deaths" is overshadowed by the announcement on 1st January of the death of an exiled person who was living on the street in Calais, following a heart complication...

There were very few days of sea crossings to the United Kingdom: none between 14th November and 13th December, then none from 23rd December, according to Home Office figures.

This is not to say that there have been no attempts:

*on the evening of 4th December (the 5th was the only day of "weather window" announced for days, i.e. the only possible day of passage) we are two volunteers from Salam who came across in Dunkirk, at the end of a theatre show, a group of several dozen people, kids on our shoulders, big shopping bag in hand (enough to spend one or more nights in the dunes?), life jackets on your back or in a shopping bag). Were they the same group? We will never know... What is certain is that they did not join the United Kingdom that time...

* On the 13th, it was a day of lunch distribution by the Dutch team of "Stand By you". We read in their report: "Many women and some children were soaked this morning... We gave them clothes, according to what we had... »

Soaked? Of course, these are failed return legs...

*On the same day in Calais, our team saw a large group on rue des Mouettes, with children, sitting on the ground, hungry, with two police cars. They are not wet, but this is the place where the police bring the exiles back, when they find them in case they fail to pass.

The weather hasn't radically improved since then (it's not the season, but at least the wind has dropped...). Crossings resumed between 13th and 22nd December: 2180 on 36 dinghies (between 60 and 61 per dinghy), again according to the Home Office.

For the month of December in 2024, they had announced 3254 passages on 63 canoes (between 51 and 52 per canoe).

Of course, some continue to pass by truck without the Home Office counting them.

On 17th December, our team in Calais saw many Sudanese passing by, backpacks on their backs, asking for provisions to try their luck with the trucks...

Our authorities seemed to fear that the installation of toilets in Loon-Plage would lead to an increase in the number of exiles... (This is the famous theory of the draught). They can be reassured. The first 22 toilet stalls arrived on 18th December, the 20th being the day with the highest number of visits in the UK since 8th October. And the desire to leave could not have been clearer: on 20th December at lunch, we only saw 150 people coming! To find such a low number in Dunkirk, we have to go back in our archives to 27th January, 2025 and to find a number below 600 we have to go back to the 580 of 10th and 15th October, 2025 (average of the month 725 meals per day).

The number of meals still rose again at the end of the month, without however exceeding 500...

Will the authorities really be surprised by this decrease?

Not us.

Of course, the presence of toilets, with separation of men and women and with closure from the inside, is a progress that we have been dreaming of since there were some next to the Linière hangars during the total COVID lockdown five years ago. But this does not solve all the problems of precariousness and insalubrity, in particular with the seizure of tents with no possibility of return during dismantling.

In Calais, the number of exiles has decreased more slowly...

We had exceeded 1,000 breakfasts on 2nd and 5th December, and given 1200 on the 6th, on the 20th we distributed only 700 and 670 on the 21st, to also reach around 500 in the last days of the month. But it was cold and as a result the quantity of hot drinks remained stable: one hundred and thirty liters were distributed (100 litres of tea and 30 of coffee) plus 45 litres of milk...

On 14th December, Olivier Schitteck made a small photographic report on Loon-Plage, which he kindly allowed us to use:





Olivier is a volunteer at the "Red Cross" and for months (from Grande-Synthe to Loon-Plage), he offered daily showers to exiles, in his personal motorhome.

The situation is comparable in Calais: the team from the dressing room on 3rd December sent us the following photo:



DISMANTLING:

Dunkirk:

Six in October, four in November, only one in on the 3rd December.

It's a fairly quick operation, this time (from 8:24 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) but again with 15 CRS trucks, 4 cleaning vehicles, a backhoe loader and a big red dumpster. The Human Rights Observers are kept away and see almost nothing. It was a testimony from an exile by phone who told him that the police were confiscating tents.

"It's a requisition from the prosecutor," says a police officer but he does not show the paper.



Calais :

The rhythm of dismantling three times a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays) had been perfectly respected this month until Monday 22nd December.

In general, it was short operations, on BMX, with a few seizures.

On the 3rd, there was also an intervention behind the PASS and 17 rue des Huttes.

But there were no dismantling operations in Calais between 22nd December and 2nd January: Is it a Christmas truce? It would be a good surprise... everything is possible...

The only major operation took place on the 12th on the site of the Hospital and concerned only half of the land occupied; It lasted more than 7 hours (from before 6 a.m., with a flashlight, to after 1 p.m.).

This is the site to which those who were definitively evicted from the orange squat on 30th September have retreated.

There is a great deal of confusion:

It is announced as a shelter.

Audasse buses are present.

The Human Rights Observers saw at least four buses and two vans leave.

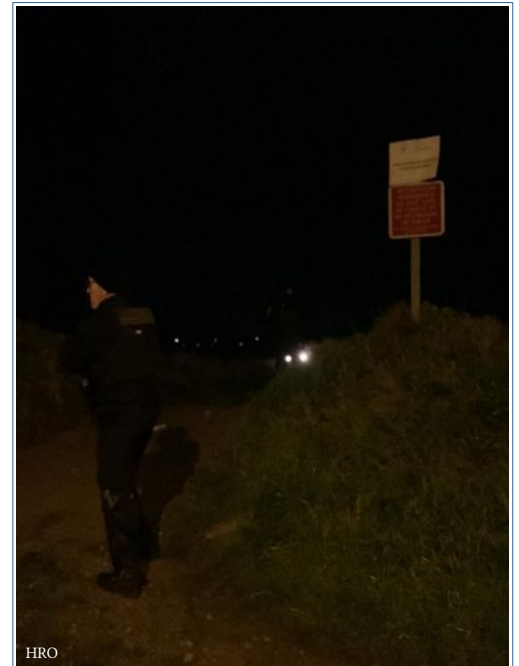
BUT:

*An exile sends a message to say that they are forced to leave...

*A policeman says the opposite and indeed some have not left.

*Some say that they were forced but that they were allowed to go further down into Calais.

Others testify that the police came in the morning, opened the tents and forced them out and onto buses.



*At 10:24 a.m., some say that they were taken to rue des Huttes but that there was no more room in the CAES.

*At 11:10 a.m., others call that they have been on the bus since the morning. We have since learned that they would have been taken to Lyon!

The seizures were numerous: at least 98 tents (including 22 full of equipment) and 27 tarpaulins.

The possibility of recovering personal belongings also seems to have been given in a very confused way, without the slightest rigour...

First, two people ask to go back to collect their documents, a policeman escorts them, later the police tell nine others that they will have to go to the Ressourcerie "It's the instructions and potentially his things have already been taken, so he will go for nothing...", comments a policeman.



From 10:17 am, everyone is refused access to the tents.
 At 11:57 am, the tone rose, police and exiles came to blows.
 Five CRS arrived as reinforcements to make the guys retreat.
 At 12:21 pm it was the rotation of the CRS, everyone took advantage of it and came back to try to get their belongings back. The police give in and tell them that they have 30 minutes to get their belongings back, and then the seizures will resume.

At 9:54 a.m., the Human Rights Observers saw the Salam truck, which had come for breakfast, being turned away. In fact, they were able to enter a little further. They saw the land just evacuated returned to the excavator; there was not a bush left, nothing...



The next day, it was clear that it was almost exclusively tents and tarpaulins that were taken: the ground was covered with abandoned clothes and pieces of uprooted trees...

Out of 930 breakfasts, Salam gave 750 that morning on this site of the Hospital...

A friend who came with a donation drive from the Paris region was outraged: "We don't have the right to let people live like this!"

SHELTERING.

The number of places is insufficient.

In Calais, the breakfast team passes through rue des Huttes, where the sub-prefecture's shuttle comes to pick up the volunteers for shelter. Often they notice the shortcomings:

*on 1st December, 15 to 20 people remain there; there were no buses,

*on 3rd December, all but 3 people were able to leave,

*On 8th December, the gate had been opened for everyone, which meant that everyone was going to leave. But all of a sudden, they threw them out, including young people who had recently arrived with suitcases on wheels! Bad humor rumbled in the ranks of the repressed...

In Dunkirk, we have focused on the seizure of equipment and lack precise testimonies on sheltering....

THE EXTREME COLD PLAN HAS BEEN ACTIVATED IN OUR TWO DEPARTMENTS, announced on Tuesday 23rd December, for an evening opening from Wednesday 24th to the morning of **Monday 29th**.

Access is only possible via shuttle buses.

On the 29th, the extension was announced through the Red Cross only on the Dunkirk side, with no end date for the moment.

In Calais, some associations learned on the 30th from the DDETS that the system would resume on the evening of December 31st for three consecutive nights... After two days of interruption during which the milder temperatures remained very relative... on 2nd January, MSF announced that the scheme had been extended until Monday 5th January.

In Calais, dedicated rooms exist, for adult men and for minors separately.

According to one exile, people are kicked out at 8 am

Women and families must go through the 115 number.

In Dunkirk, a gymnasium has been requisitioned for the night, 160 places have been announced...

The people staying must leave the premises at 8:30 am

8 am or 8:30 am is the same thing: because of the cold weather it is right now, it means that people spend the whole day outside, starting at this early hour. We who distribute on Loon-Plage at lunchtime, we come home frozen... "Freezing cold is terrible," wrote Arnaud after the distribution on 3rd January at noon. And we return to heated houses with the hot shower waiting for us, available as soon as we arrive.

On the morning of 28th December, in Calais, Salam's team saw a pile of blankets on rue des Mouettes. In fact, he is a young Eritrean (in the 14/15 years old) who had been looking for a little warmth there. He was inert, motionless, mute... The only words he said were "No tent"... He drank a cup of hot tea under his blankets, got up for a second cup of tea before returning to what served as his shelter...

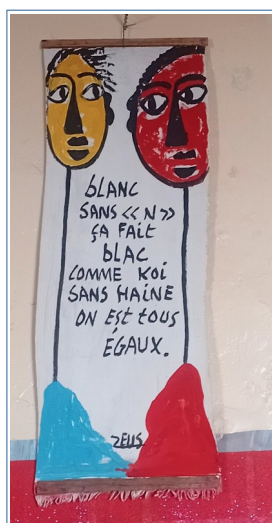
Utopia 56 says that the system for minors was full on the first evening and that the one for adults was almost full.

In Dunkirk, the Red Cross informs us that people staying overnight are offered a hot meal in the evening and breakfast in the morning. They have access to showers and hygiene kits. They can charge their mobile phones.

The only information collected on the attendance was that only about fifty people were seen by an association just before the departure of the shuttle on the evening of Thursday 25th.

**In conclusion,
For those who are tempted by the rejection of foreigners...**

Nothing prevents the exiles from taking a minimum of care of themselves in the worst conditions of precariousness: in the photo, the bathroom cabinet of the exiles of Loon-Plage (14th December):



- an image full of humor and common sense at the same time, on Ferri's Facebook page, on 22nd December:

Claire Millot

DUNKIRK, THE EVENING DISTRIBUTIONS

Since the beginning of April, Pascaline has been giving us a weekly presentation of her actions. Here is a summary for the month of December.

She made between one and four distributions per week.

She was often accompanied by volunteers (from Salam and/or Stricx, Help 4 Dunkerque, Maison Sésame and "More food, no border"* in the second half of the month.

Don't hesitate to say if one evening you want to accompany him.

Listing the requests received, preparing the belongings and loading them into the truck takes an average of one hour. Then, a distribution lasts on average one to two hours depending on the number of people present... "In the first half of the month, we asked people to come at different times (6 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 7:30 p.m.) in order to avoid everyone arriving at the same time and not to have to manage the order of passage. Fortunately, there were five of us the first few times, because it was sporty!

But in the second week, word spread quickly, and everyone arrived early, so the starts were always a bit rushed.

Then, in the second half of the month, the distributions were fewer and quieter for three reasons:

- My absence at the beginning of the third week: The first distribution took place only on Thursday evening in Clauser, mainly orders.
- Many went on a "try" **on Friday: On Saturday, we served 150 meals at lunchtime. In the afternoon, we went directly to the distribution car park: very few people on site.
- The arrival of "Help 4 Dunkirk" and the distributions provided by "Emmaus at the borders" (Maison Sésame), combined with the fact that there was no dismantling, significantly reduced the requests: I must have received a maximum of six requests during the week!

Special moments

"The first week, the distributions all took place in Clauser, a relatively central point for all the camps. The place is lit and its remoteness makes it possible to manage orders without being overwhelmed by an overly massive influx of people without orders.

On Monday and Wednesday, about forty orders were served and the truck was well filled. At first, getting to the truck was almost like acrobatics!

I returned on Thursday evening to respond to five requests for blankets and tents, then on Saturday afternoon for about twenty people, with only simple needs. I have kept all the other requests for Monday evening. Since the morning of December 7th, I no longer give a precise deadline on the date of distribution: I simply indicate that I will get back to them during the week, because without even having started the list of requests, we will already be very busy on Monday evening!

Three large distributions, in the second week, lasted an average of two hours for about forty orders for each distribution.

Apart from these three large distributions, a few blankets were brought back on Friday evening as everyone left the camp to try to cross to England. It was impressive to see the huge groups of people all along the road between the camp and the Auchan bus stop. A lot of families and many children that we don't see too much during the distributions anymore (back from hotels, probably also children who are staying in tents at the moment).

A passage also to bring back laundry, (many came back soaked with "try" **) and to distribute hot things. It was very cool...

A freezing cold has been present since the beginning of the second fortnight.

On Tuesday 23rd, I passed at noon in Ryssen and at the camp on the left on my way to Ryssen, where a few women and children still live.

Friday 26th afternoon, we made a distribution with volunteers from "More food, no border"*, Their truck was already equipped with jackets and blankets; We have completed it with our equipment.

There were six of us and we covered several camps far from the parking lot: Matthews, the Somali camp (small path on the left towards Ryssen, going into the woods), the camp near the railway next to Ryssen, then finally the bus stop near the distribution car park.

The next day, it was an additional distribution, for those who had placed orders during the week:

Sunday: on my way back to Salam to clean the two bins of food brought back by Help the day before, I made a detour to the distribution car park for guys who needed a tent and blankets.

Relations with the police: peaceful...

No police visit the first week of the month, or else, if there was, we were too busy to notice!

On Wednesday 10, we met the police near Ryssen as we were leaving. They just put the torch on our vehicle without stopping and left without asking for anything.

On Saturday the 13th, the police came to ask us who we were but didn't insist... We were a little busy.

DISTRIBUTION BALANCE:

were given, from 1st to 28th December:

- about twenty tents,
- between 190 and 200 blankets and sleeping bags,
- about 150 jackets,
- 18 boxes of trousers and jogging pants
- 17 boxes of sweaters and sweatshirts
- more than 30 t-shirts,
- a hundred pairs of shoes,
- 3 boxes and 4 bags of socks,
- 4 boxes of scarves,
- 3 boxes of gloves, hats and neck warmers (large enough to be worn on the head).
- a large number of gloves (especially construction site gloves), given at will,

Thank you to all the people who make these distributions possible.

A big thank you to Patrick and Strix for their precious help: alone, you can't do as much!

Thank you also to all those who brought donations and to those who sorted: the bags already prepared and labelled beforehand really facilitated the distribution.

Last Saturday, it was packed. Stocks never last long — and that's a good thing, because the needs in the camp are enormous.

The stock of blankets, which had been gradually reconstituted, was very low again on 7 December. I was hoping that Audotri would be able to provide us with some at the beginning of the week. For the moment, Hasbia has no news of her contact in Belgium; I hope that it can resume quickly too.

The week after 14th December, "Help 4 Dunkerque" arrived in the distribution area with the T-shop as it does every winter. They offer hot drinks and bread and also provide for the most urgent needs. I will be away until Thursday, and with the holidays in the following weeks a little less present than in recent months. But we don't give up!

We had good news this week (victories at the Administrative Court), but we must now ensure that they materialize within the announced deadlines, and continue to mobilize to have enough accommodation places. We must also put an end to the destruction of people's property, which would partly avoid starting all over again.

* « more food no border » :

These are volunteers from canteens in France, Belgium and Germany, united in an association, who provide a daily hot meal in addition to those offered by the usual associations (often around 4 p.m. or on Fridays at noon) for three weeks.

** « try » : attempt to pass.

Pascaline Delaby.

PS. Screenshot of Pascaline's phone, December 22nd:

« Thank you pascaline for your help You were our helper, always ready and available when we needed you. On behalf of Somalis, I would like to thank you. May God bless you. All of our friends, including me, have reached the UK. My friends and I miss your help while we are here. Thank you and have a great Merry Christmas

Merci Pascaline pour ton aide. Tu nous as aidés, tu étais toujours prête et disponible quand on avait besoin de toi.

Au nom des Somaliens, je tiens à te remercier. Que Dieu te bénisse.

Tous nos amis, moi y compris, sont arrivés au Royaume-Uni.

Mes amis et moi regrettons ton aide maintenant que nous sommes ici.

Merci et passe un joyeux Noël

**TESTIMONIES: OUR FRIENDS FROM MAISONS-LAFFITTE PASSING THROUGH LOON-PLAGE ON
NOVEMBER 29TH.**

SORRY... SORRY...

Christmas is fast approaching but on the camp the situation of our friends is bogged down, literally and figuratively... They all waded through the omnipresent slush. Children and mothers skidded, slipped and the four irons in the air slumped in puddles and other mud 'baths'... Pascaline has lost count of the bags of laundry to be done on her way home from camp.

This time, I'm accompanied by Chris and Christine. Seasonal names? In any case, very good company! This trip provided changes of warm, dry and clean clothes. Thank you to the members of *Musique pour la Vie*, to Anne-Catherine Mourgue and her students from the Darius Milhaud college in Sartrouville. A great outpouring of generosity and solidarity filled two vehicles to the brim. The empty bins in the basement of the room where Salam stores the donations are once again well filled. Blankets, duvets, shoes, warm clothes take their place on the allocated shelves. Some of the mini toys and small stuffed animals are precious kept in the Ali Baba room so that they can be distributed, over time and not all of a sudden to the same children present at the day's distribution. Claire and Pascaline will make sure that each child can receive them, even if it means bringing them to their tent in the evening or on the next distributions.

Even today, because unfortunately the situation is stagnating for these families and young exiles, Christine notices all these feet moving towards the distribution table. Our hearts sink when we see some of them in beach flip-flops, often without socks, in other words barefoot in the icy slush.



The harp is strategically placed between the men's file and the women/families file. There was no jostling this morning, everyone moved forward quietly, calmly. The features are drawn, they all look exhausted, drained... However, none of them can resist the temptation to caress the strings of the small harp as they pass. Instantly, a radiant smile lights up their faces and when our eyes meet, we see the stars of Life and hope twinkling.

Suddenly a hand slips in from the right to play and there he is, sneaking in without queuing! I try to get him to return to the end of the endless line like all the impatient people who have already tried to shorten their wait before and left without negotiating too much. Pascaline comes as reinforcement and with her, no discussion. They listen to him and go back to square one right away. Not out of fear or fear of being mistreated or even gassed as the police would do without any hesitation. Everyone remembers those terrible awakenings in the middle of the night when a dismantling is launched without warning and only flight can save them... This anxiety of the manhunt that takes you to the gut and increases tenfold the ability to run, to surpass oneself to survive... None of that here. Pascaline gives them what they need most.

His precious support and caring attention. Salam works on all fronts to help this multitude of people who have been flayed alive by life, embarked on this murderous storm that they discover as the days go by and the misery that accompanies them on this dangerous journey. Everyone who is here waiting to eat is a survivor! Escaped death so many times...



SALAM = CONFIDENCE + HOPE, none bites the hand that feeds them. Gratitude emanates from all these hands stretched out towards the tray of saving hot food and the benevolent smile of the volunteers present on November 29, 2025.

I play as best I can. The drizzle and the icy wind numb my fingers, which turn bluish. A young man with shining eyes and a bright smile hands me his gloves: "Take, for you! *Here, it's for you!* Hand on heart... He gives me what is most precious to him. I managed to return them to him, not without difficulty, showing him that the harp no longer sounded with gloves. He finally agrees to pick them up and continues to move forward for his only hot meal of the day. Christine discovers life on the camp for the first time: touched, moved... She assures that she will come back with even more warm, waterproof things...

The harp starting to get wetter and wetter, we go to join Claire to take her to safety in her car. I feel pulled by the arm. He is tall, he is so young, his radiant smile reveals perfect and bright teeth in the middle of his beautiful ebony face. "Sorry Ma'am - *I'm sorry...*" A whiff of incomprehension tinged with anger rises in me. But what does he feel sorry for, in front of me, to us who in this country should at least welcome these families in their exile with dignity? Freedom? Equality? Fraternity? Where are they? I am the one who feels so ashamed and guilty for finding myself so powerless in the face of all this suffering. I can make out Claire's fluorescent vest in the distance: 'Salam'. Thank you Salam! Thank you to all the volunteers present today and also to all the teams who work to allow these families to grow up more confidently for a better life in a better world. Tender thoughts also to you Yolaine and to the teams in Calais.

In fact, this young boy apologizes for slipping into the queue without waiting for his turn and not listening when I asked him not to overtake and to go back to the back. At an age when they need to feed themselves so much, how can we insist that such a young and hungry being resist the call of the belly, the call of survival? All he has left is this instinct, like the last efforts that some too many have had to make to tap their feet to get their heads above water and be able to take another breath of saving air...

As on every trip, I leave touched in the heart and swollen with hope and gratitude because on the camps there also reigns this form of unconditional love, the main ingredient of true solidarity.

The little harp will of course return!

Wishing you all a wonderful and bright holiday season in music, a universal language that passes from heart to heart and capable of lightening everything☺



PS. The weight of words, the shock of photos:

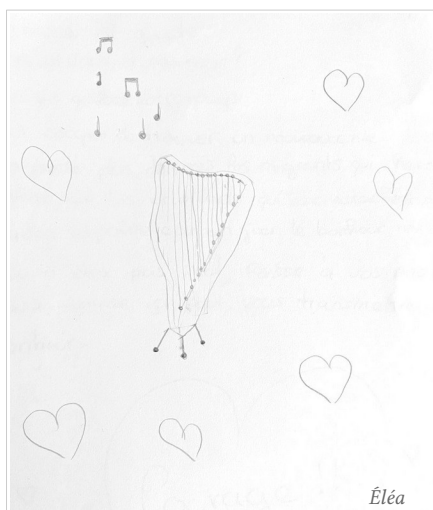
This young man sitting on the bathtub upside down... But what is this bathtub doing there: the irony of having one and only being able to use it as a bench*!

This image is so out of place and, on other levels, so out of place: it speaks of what is experienced in front of and behind in the camps, this solitude, this mud...

*It is November 29, and it is not until December 4 that the Court will order access to showers for all.

These days of misery,
Which spoil the air for us.
And this thought of nostalgia,
Reminds me of my country.

Miles away
I see these beings.
And this style,
Makes me sensitive



But this nightmare,
Turns into hope.
When I see this harp,
My heart catches

From blonde hair,
Accompanied by donations.
Bring us back at last a glimmer,
Of softness.
Sofiya

BEFORE GOING TO THE CAMPS, WE IMAGINE THEM...



... but unfortunately we are far from reality! It is a shock to see them installed in the mud, in the middle of the waste, with a single water point for hundreds of people and families. To make a queue, which never ends, for the only hot meal they will have during the day in the rain and cold. Many with very small jackets that don't protect against anything, some in flip-flops, others who don't even have socks!

"The jungle, they call it" it's true, it's a jungle but not with animals but with human beings! And in the middle of all this, smiles despite all this horror... They give us lessons in humanity, those who have nothing! Thank you to all the people I met who are suns in the middle of this storm, who give their time, their energy, their affection without counting the cost to help these migrants! You give me back my faith in human beings! Tonight I have a heavy heart, and feel guilty for being warm at the bottom of my bed while they go to sleep in the cold in the forest...

Christine de Maisons-Laffitte

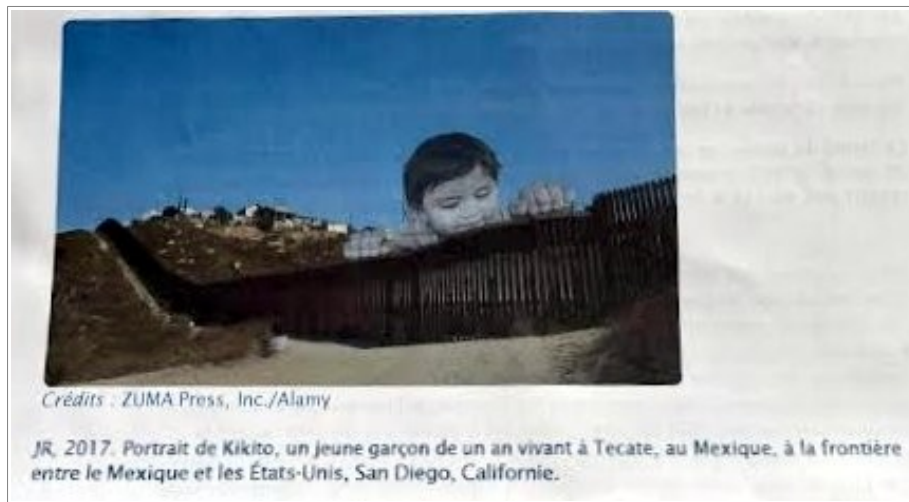
THESE ACHIEVEMENTS: THE POEM AND THE DRAWING, SLIPPED BETWEEN THE TWO TESTIMONIES, LIKE THE TWO DRAWINGS THAT WERE CHOSEN TO ILLUSTRATE OUR GREETING CARD THIS YEAR) were done in class, at the Darius Milhaud college in Sartrouville.

2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025...

It is now a tradition.

Every year, at the same time, young people first discover the reality of the migrant camps on our coast and then they start writing, under the benevolent gaze and encouragement of their French teacher, Anne-Catherine Mourgue, and to the sound of the harp of our friend Bélinda.

This year, Anne-Catherine Mourgue first gave them this document:



with the following instruction:

"With this work, JR denounces the wall built on the border between the United States and Mexico to stop migrants. (...)

In turn, write - to the sound of the harp - a poetic text (in verse or prose) or draw to denounce or question the theme of the border or that of migrants. »

***THE ROAD AHEAD IS GOING TO BE LONG AND VERY DIFFICULT.
(TESTIMONIAL)***

What a strange day in Popenguine.

The impression of being in Calais with Salam or in Wimereux with "Alors on Aide".

And yet I'm 6,000 km away.

For the first time, a boat ran aground on the beach of Popenguine with 200 shipwrecked.

Their boat, in very poor condition, took on water... They escaped drowning.

They are from Gambia, Mali, Conakry.

Very young men... women, some young girls and very young children.

All of them were brought to the Popenguine gendarmerie.

After hours of sitting without eating and drinking, I can do nothing but decide to go talk with the gendarmes to see if ok to bring them water, milk, bread and biscuits.

So here we are... us: my girlfriend Cricri and Baba the driver and me... gone shopping for to try to comfort these 200 people.

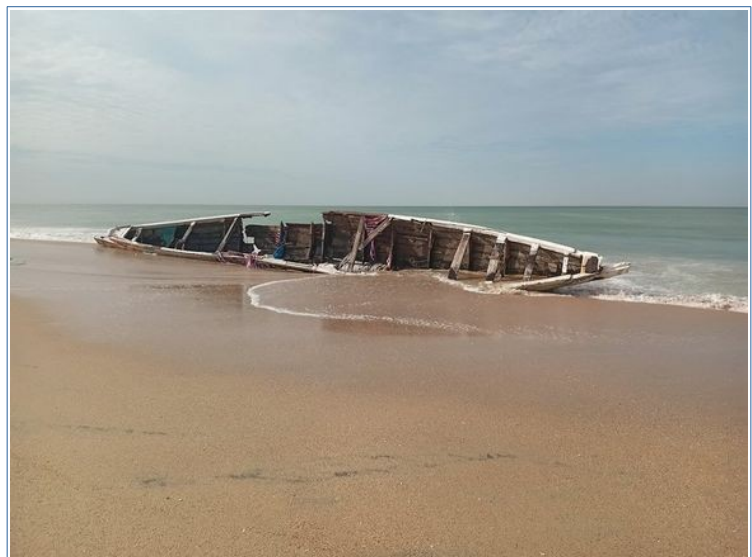
Emotional distribution with the help of the gendarmes.

We even had a mini concert with balafon and songs and dancing to thank us.

A big congratulations to the gendarmes of Popenguine for their humanity and kindness towards these refugees.

The journey may be long for them but their hopes remain intact...

Ferri Matheeuwsen (Facebook, 23rd
December 2025)
(Ferri, a volunteer in Salam is Dutch)



TECHNICAL NOTE:
ANALYSIS OF AN INFLATABLE BOAT MATERIAL (PVC COATED POLYESTER)



Background:

Antoine (a volunteer in Salam) found himself in front of a dinghy on the beach, between Hardelet and Camiers, on 13th August.

There was no engine, a few personal belongings...A blow with a box cutter (after destruction by the authorities) to remove a piece of black pudding reveals that it is a light canvas coated with a plastic coating.

1. Purpose

This note presents the analysis of a **sample of flexible material** recovered on a beach on the Channel coast, identified as coming from a **light inflatable boat**. The objective is to **characterize its structure** and **estimate the maximum permissible internal pressure**, by mechanical reasoning.

2. Description of the sample

2.1 Thickness and Lamination

Measurements carried out on a straight cut:

Total thickness: 0.8mm

Tri-layer structure:

Textile core: ~0.4mm, synthetic woven fabric (polyester-compatible appearance)

Waterproof coating: ~0.2mm on each side

2.2 Probable nature of the materials

Coating: **plastic-coated PVC**, high-frequency weldable

Textile core: **low-density polyester**, estimated between **500 and 700**

Set compatible with lightweight, **non-offshore marine certified** coated PVC fabric

3. Simplified mechanical analysis

3.1 Selected model

The inflatable tube is likened to a **thin membrane under internal pressure**, the resistance being provided almost exclusively by the textile core. The PVC coating ensures waterproofing but contributes little to mechanical resistance.

Assumptions:

New, homogeneous material

Static Load

Tube with a running diameter: **45 to 55cm**

4. Maximum pressure estimation

4.1 Theoretical (Static) Rupture Pressure

On the basis of:

the thickness of the canvas,

the observed textile density,

comparisons with similar industrial inflatable fabrics,

The **internal pressure leading to the rupture of the material** is estimated at:

(25 to 35 kPa / 3.6 to 5 psi)

This value corresponds to an ideal state (without defects, without aging).

4.2 Realistic Permissible Pressure (Actual Use)

Under real conditions (abrasion, wrinkles, UV, dynamic impacts), a **minimum safety factor of 3 to 4** must be applied.

Estimated maximum permissible pressure: 0.08 to 0.12 bar
(8 to 12 kPa / 1.2 to 1.7 psi)

5. Aggravating factors in the marine environment

Even at moderate pressure, the material is highly vulnerable to:

Solar overheating → pressure increase (+7 to +10%)

Repeated bending → coating fatigue

Micro-abrasions (sand, pebbles) → exposure of the canvas

HF welds → preferential fracture zones

Accelerated UV aging of PVC

These factors can lead to an **abrupt rupture below the theoretical pressure**.

6. Comparison with marine references

Type of boat	Typical thickness	Pressure rating
Basic leisure annex	0,9–1,1 mm	0,18–0,25 bar
Certified RIB	1,1–1,4 mm	0,25–0,30 bar
Sample analyzed	0,8 mm	≤ 0,10 bar

7. Conclusion

The sample analysed corresponds to a **very light coated polyester PVC fabric**, with:

low **mechanical resistance**,

very **limited permissible pressure**,

No safety margin against marine stresses.

This type of material is **suitable for occasional and short-term buoyancy**, but **unsuitable for navigation in the open sea**, especially in high-energy areas such as the English Channel.

8. Limitations

This estimate is based on:

visual observation,

indirect mechanical measurements,

Comparison with industrial data.

It **does not replace a laboratory destructive test**, but provides a **robust order of magnitude**.

Antoine de la Fouchardière.

PERPECTIVES ON MIGRATION

THOUSANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE SWALLOWED UP BY THE SEA THAT NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT.

Here I am three weeks in Africa

A life in slow motion

Red sand... wind and sun and thousands of birds singing.

But also coups d'état, very violent wars and a very hard life for young people on a daily basis.

So there are thousands of other birds... migratory... who dream of going to Europe.

Every day there are tragedies between the Gambia... Conakry or Senegal to Morocco... Tunesia or the Canary Islands.

Thousands of young people swallowed up by the sea that no one is talking about.

And thousands of families broken forever.

Ferri Mattheuwsen (Facebook, 3rd December, 2025)



MIGRATION ISSUE - A COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

The news is rich in information on migration. Not all published data fall under the same register. Some concern migration policies, with an ideology and often repressive strategies claimed. Others are public reports, carried out by experts with scientific analysis, based on official statistics that document the evolution of the labour market and the evolution of the foreign workforce. The first information appeals to emotions, and knowingly creates a diffuse threat and generates anxiety. The latter address reason, demonstrating, with figures to back it up, the reality of a phenomenon that has always existed since the beginnings of humanity, migrations.

Public opinion, called as a witness in the first case, reassured in the second case, is in full "cognitive dissonance". Developed in 1957 by the American psychologist Léon Festinger, the theory of cognitive dissonance (CDT) is considered a major model for psychology (1). It has inspired many theories and generates many studies and reflections, both in social psychology and in related disciplines. It can be summarized as a three-step process: (a) when an individual is confronted with two inconsistent cognitions, (b) he or she will experience psychological discomfort (i.e., a state of cognitive dissonance) (c) which will motivate him or her to use strategies to return to a satisfactory state. When it comes to migration, public opinion is caught in a pincer movement and challenged.

The United States' migration strategy since the arrival of a new conservative team in Washington in January 2025 has been deliberately caricatured to strike public opinion, both within its borders and abroad. Elected on an openly anti-migration platform, with xenophobic excesses for the most extremist part of the Republican electorate (MAGA - Make America great again), Donald Trump's presidency insults and brutalizes migrants (all potential criminals or terrorists), especially those who are in an irregular situation, while they have often been living and working for several years on American territory. A specially equipped police force (ICE) is assigned to search for them with forceful arrests, readily televised and relayed by social networks. A step has been taken in 2025. What is new is that the American government intends to impose its views on the rest of the Western world, in particular on Europe, an ideological vassalization.

In a national security strategy document published on Friday, December 5, 2025, the United States slams Europe, which is threatened with "economic decline" and "civilizational erasure" due to immigration (2). The document quotes the words of Vice President J.D. Vance at the Munich Security Conference in February 2025. The American document acknowledges an expected erasure, according to its authors, of Europe due to "the fall in the birth rate, the loss of national identities, the repression of political opposition, the censorship of freedom of expression, the "regulatory asphyxiation", and immigration "In the long term, it is more than plausible that in a few decades at most, some NATO members will have a non-European majority". The American team continues its open interference by suggesting an "ideological annexation", and conditioning its aid on the support by European countries of "patriotic European parties", i.e. anti-migration and against the European Union.

The brutality of the American strategy towards the European Union, and its members, does not only concern migration but its instrumentalisation is a specific tactic of the far right. Based on the work of the American political scientist Elisabeth Carter, the French researchers Tristan Boursier and Antoine Lemor have identified seven categories of their ideas: national identity, tradition, authority, the promotion of individual merit, order, and the rejection of equality and immigration (3). By dint of repeating them, they end up contaminating minds already destabilized by economic, political and social conjunctures in crisis. More easily influenced, they are happy to look for scapegoats. The United States' offensive, since January 2025, once a democratic compass, is further increasing the confusion.

To neutralize this anxiety-provoking information, which is part of ideology and propaganda, Western European democracies have adopted different strategies depending on their history. In order not to be accused of laxity, social democratic governments, such as in Denmark, have adopted a restrictive migration policy since the 2015 migration crisis, worried about the threat to their welfare state, and the rise of the far right in its immediate neighbours, Sweden and the Netherlands, where it has entered government. The European Union, anticipating a breakthrough for far-right parties in the 2024 European Parliament elections, has tightened the terms of the Asylum and Migration Pact, which comes into force in June 2026, by strengthening border procedures and lowering the requirement of solidarity (with regard to refugees) in the European countries deemed most exposed (Cyprus, Spain, Greece, Italy...).

Examples of "good practice" and "role models" should be emphasized. Spain is an example of economic dynamism in Europe (2.6% growth in 2025), which it owes to its foreign workforce. It has facilitated their reception through a policy of openness by several successive governments, for example with regard to Latin American nationals (Zapatero's Historical Memory Law in 2007 supplemented in 2022 by Sanchez's Law on Democratic Memory). (4) Documenting is also crucial. The reports published by think tanks specialising in migration insist on the needs of the foreign workforce in the face of Europe's real demographic decline and the growing number of jobs not filled by nationals - (Pro Causa Foundation in Spain, Terra Nova in France) (5)... In addition, official statistics, European (Eurostat) or international (OECD) point in the same direction - European countries are in dire need of foreign nationals.

The mobilization of civil society (local elected officials, associations, entrepreneurs, citizens, etc.) is decisive. In Sweden, the Association of Swedish Municipalities and Regions (SKR) warned in November 2024 (6) about the shortage of national labour and the need for foreign skills in their communities where it represents 22% of municipal and regional jobs, 40% of doctors, 50% of home helpers, etc. In France, associative collectives (7) are calling on the public authorities in the media by quantifying, for example, a security strategy that is costly for public finances (150 million Euros to evacuate the camps) when entire sectors of the economy need the labour force of exiles.

The "*Brussels effect*" has not said its last word - we are now building a new model of resistance and resilience in the face of "false friends" and real "enemies" who attack us on all fronts. The strategy that maintains confusion with anxiety-provoking information and multiplies aggressions by denigrating Europe is rational and deliberate. Resistance is the only means of survival for Europeans to preserve their psychological integrity (in the face of cognitive dissonance) and to continue to defend their values. *In varietate concordia!*

Bénédicte Halba, president of iriv (www.iriv.net) author of a blog on migration - <https://actions-migration.blogspot.com/> December 2025

- 1) Alexandre Bran, David Vaidis. New Horizons on Cognitive Dissonance: Recent Developments, Integrative Models and Research Avenues. The Psychological Year, 2022, Vol. 122 (1), pp.149-183. 10.3917/anpsy1.221.0149. halshs-03772406- <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03772406/document>
- 2) Piotr Smolar "Washington takes aim at Europeans", Le Monde, Sunday 7 and Monday 8 December 2025
- 3) Reading note by Claire Legros on issue 2, volume 75 of the Revue française de science politique, April-June 2025, Le Monde, 6th December 2025.
- 4) Isabelle Piquer, "Spain boosts its prosperity through immigration", Le Monde, 22nd October 2025
- 5) Hakim El Karoui and Juba Ihaddaden, report published by the Terra Nova Foundation, Paris, 12th May 2025- https://tnova.fr/site/assets/files/70453/terra_nova_-_travailleurs_immigres_-12_05_25.pdf?1wgdwz3
- 6) **Anne-Françoise Hivert** (Malmö (Sweden), "**In Sweden, municipalities defy the government on assisted voluntary return of immigrants**", **Le Monde 23rd October 2025**
- 7) Collective of associations (16 organisations) including Parcours d'exil, Médecins du Monde, Osiris Association, La Cimade, Louis Guilloux network, Médecins sans Frontières, Jesuit Refugee Service France, Primo Levi Center, Human Rights League, Refugee Forum & Appeal to the Council of State formed by Secours Catholique, l'Auberge des migrants, Médecins du monde, or the GISTI, Le Monde, 15th October 2025.

THE SYMPOSIUM "RESISTANCE AGAINST MASS EVICTION PLANS" OF THE EUROPEAN UNION" on 10th and 11th December in Brussels.

December 10 was established as "Human Rights Day" by the UN in 1948.

I was invited by Damien Carême.
Two days of presentations and discussions.



No sensational revelations but touching testimonies and striking words...

This conference is only the beginning of a work: sending people away is not effective and is contrary to the morals of those who do it...

These expulsions from Europe are a historic upheaval..

Migration is not a crime,

Hospitality is not a privilege,

Deportation is not an abstract thing: someone is put on a plane...

We listened to the testimony of a man who was tortured for years, "while we (and he looked at us as he spoke) sat in our armchair accepting what was being done to him"...

And really we feel bad, even if we were of course not aware of it and if we don't know what we could have done...

We must use the law, go through the courts, first the national courts, then the European Court of Human Rights.

But...

When the law is lacking, there is only solidarity.

Direct action is needed:

- People in the USA who are picked up from their homes to be deported: we have to make our neighbours react...

- Prevent a plane from leaving if there is a deported person among the passengers.

- Making a political showcase of a public action: the passage of the Bidasoa is the cause of many drownings. People who wanted to cross this border are involved in a foot race that uses a bridge. To avoid being charged under Article 40 (aiding irregular passage), a hundred organizations and about 5,000 people who supervised them are self-indicting...

On the second day we had, in a small group, very rich discussions on civil disobedience:

In what case are we ready to outlaw ourselves? : you have to see the relationship between the danger you are ready to run and the effectiveness you hope for from this action...

Are we ready to be taken into custody, to be charged, to be beaten?

*For example, it is often said that if you stand on a plane in which a person who has been forcibly evacuated is boarded at the same time as you, all you have to do is get up. The pilot was then unable to leave and the evacuation was cancelled.

But this is no longer true: people who witnessed this type of scene saw those who oppose being evacuated and charged and the expelled person was taken away anyway...

*You run much less risk if you have the nationality of the country in which you want to intervene. Having a residence permit is not enough to protect: it is fragile.*Another observation: you take fewer risks if you are white or if you are an old lady.

Claire Millot.

THE WOUND OF THE ASYLUM:

A poem about systemic racism and dehumanization.

Thanks to Annie and Monique for the translation.

In your mansion, Jasmine, I landed
Hoping to find refuge, freedom and sleep,
But I have only found myself in front of your eyes,
Inquisitors, cold and hostile.
You have preached freedom, equality, hope.
We don't live in your refugee camps, without security,
For my black skin, for my culture,
Aren't they the ones you're trying to spare?

You are talking about justice, about broad borders.
Of affectionate arms and tender hearts,
But in your policy and in your pride,
The reality is obvious: my freedom is gone.
You wear a mask of liberal benevolence,
And a much deeper hatred lurks underneath.
A conspiracy, not very frank embraces
Tear up your great debates.

You claim to like forms of diversity.
But you choose and love arbitrarily
Who enters your asylum, a poisoned space.
Where black people are taken for fools.
You open yourself to color, you open yourself to me,
Has the religion that suits your skin color
But to my brothers and sisters, chained,
It's just the shame of our past.

Channel after chain, history repeats itself
In shattered lives.
There are slave markets,
And this is now repeated in your refugee camp, cry.
Where your colored friends are the first in the fight.
You call it a refuge where you are cared for,
But we blacks are mired in
The loss of humanity, in the raw wound.
In an alleged flight, in fact caged.

Your freedom of thought and action,
Your loud feminist cries,
Mask a uglier and more bitter reality,
You'd rather see me disappear,
My mind and my youth.
For your colored comrades, your mute cry,
Turn every refugee camp into a camp of fear.
It is we who are erased,
Our dignity, a distant favor.

And, although you parade with your eyes wide open,
And let your borders cry out with superficial oaths,
You use the past to darken the present,
And you disguise a curse as peace.
I look at the veil behind the mask,
It's not a refuge, it's a prison,
Where my black skin is betrayed, burned,
And where all my rights are gradually flouted.

I long for the truth to come out,
May justice triumph again.
For all of us, regardless of the color of our skin,
And that we seek the tranquility that resides there.
But the wound you have caused is not about to heal.
And the wounds of the past never heal.

So, let this be a call to battle,
For every mind, for every right.
Blacks must no longer be discarded.
We want both your actions and your pride to stop.

Dr. Suryaraju,

(Renowned poet, human rights specialist, vegan and defender of freedom of expression, originally from Switzerland. He regularly publishes poems in English-language American, Israeli, European, Indian and Nagalim newspapers and publishing houses.)

We have already published a text by this author in the August 2025 newsletter.

THANK YOU

Whether or not we believe in the intervention of a higher force on our earth, or only in the force of Humanity, Christmas miracles exist... So many donations and people have arrived to us during this holiday season that I know (I am not only afraid as usual) that not all the actors of this magnificent solidarity movement will be mentioned in this page (23 people for example for the preparation-distribution of 30th December !!). I apologize to them. That they think that they are part of this beautiful and supportive team that has made it possible to get through the end-of-year festive period without difficulty, when many of the usual volunteers are kept with their families... Thank you all...

THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS:

To the usual ones, of course first, escaped from their families for a few hours...

In particular to our twins from FTS and "La Maison Sésame".



The drawing below was made for us by a child staying with them.

... and to the exceptional:

The famous ones, like Vianney Motte, our favorite swimmer, who swam for us crossing the English Channel on 20th September 2022 and circling Manhattan on 22nd June 2024. He was with us in Grande-Synthe on 22nd December this year.

And the (unfairly) less famous, among which

Juliette and Nathalie, from the Observatory of Refugee Camps, on 4th December,

Hélène and Christophe, on the 29th and 30th,

Ghislaine and Eric, on the 30th ...

To those who missed us this year but waved at us from afar:

like Renaud de Nantes,

To those we think we will see again soon:

Loïc, Jérémy...

And all these people have prepared meals:



Nathalie Bardou



Nathalie Bardou



Nathalie Bardou



Yolaine Bernard



Yolaine Bernard

Distributed:

The dressing room in Calais on 3rd December:



The meal at Loon-Plage on 4th December:

Stored and cleaned

The bread freezer was cleaned on 18th December.

Every day in Grande-Synthe, we have to separate the cutlery kits that Emmaüs Grande-Synthe gave us in abundance a few months ago. We collect the spoons and forks that are given to the distribution. In the photo, on 20th December, the men at work.



DIY

*Gaby:

"A very temporary repair of the rear light: the upper attachment of the rear light left and broken, the light is held together with a piece of plastic that has been added.

The plastic can be replaced with a stronger metal part to avoid replacing the fire

The problem comes from the beginning of seizing of the rear door hinges.

For lack of anything better, I greased the hinges with a saucepan and salad oil...

Sorry for this DIY, I couldn't find anything else!

Thanks to Patrick for his help. » 1st December

* "I have made four racks of garbage bags that can be installed around the truck during meal distributions, hoping to limit waste," Gaby wrote again on 7th December.



*On 22nd December, the same Gaby brought back a grill to put outside and facilitate the passage of the cart to the basement..

*Jean-Pierre on 25th December, in his red and white coat, took charge of a gas tripod that blackened the pots: he surely needs a serious cleaning.

*On 9th December, Henri installed a neon light to illuminate the dishwashing sink installed last month in the basement. In photos, during the installation, and after:



without forgetting to eat together:

December 22nd, the only day (in the memory of Salam's volunteer) when we had to separate the tables to seat everyone!



On December 30th, it was an almost normal table with our friends from the chip shop "Bonjour Désordre" with us.



THANK YOU TO THOSE, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, WHO GAVE US GIFTS FOR OUR EXILED FRIENDS.

Food donations:

*December 1st:

"The donations of carrots and turnips come from Christiane (one of my students from last year's English classes at the ADRA in Malo -700 retirees).

Together with her husband, they have made a breathtaking harvest of organic vegetables in their garden.

Nature fulfills us! Annie writes.

*On December 6th, Loïc, a market gardener, donated two boxes of butternuts, brought back by Ursula.

Thank you both.

*December 11th: we received Geneviève's cauliflowers,,

* and on the same day, the apple juice of Mr. and Mrs. Dassonville, in Bezinghem, a much appreciated annual gift.



*Thank you to everyone who participated in the fundraiser to buy Yule logs for the distribution in Loon-Plage on December 25th. The poster was made by our friend Sophie from Copil Saint-Joseph.

It's a day of celebration for us, our friends know it and it's good to have them participate in this moment.

Among the donors, Marie-Agnès who does a Christmas market every year at her home, for the benefit of an orphanage in Egypt, where they went to pick up their eldest son. On 6th December, she gave me a great participation in this operation.

*On 20th December, Amor dropped us off a box of chicken thighs.

Textile donations:

*Pascale de Warhem, regularly passing by with her full car,

*Nelly, Elisabeth's friend, has once again sent a parcel from Haute Saône: sixty-two hand-knitted chokers and at the bottom of the box twenty pairs of socks bought by her.

"Even if they are far away, people are thinking of them," says Elisabeth, who dropped off the package on 6th December.



*Also on 6th December, Mohammed Diallo donated men's clothing.

* on 20th December, Marion arrived with blankets and clothes.

* The same day, Tom brought back a duvet.

*On 27th December, Anne brought back two bags of clothes, plus shoes from friends from Nièvre,

*A gentleman from Armbouts Cappel came to drop off two duvets,

*And when we came back from the distribution, there were also anonymous donation bags near the access door downstairs.

Of everything a little and sometimes a lot:

*On 4th December, an anonymous gentleman dropped off a large quantity of equipment (food and clothes). It is Pascaline who then gives the solution to the riddle:

"The volunteer who donated several dozen kilos of pasta, tomato paste, tea, and a little clothing that he had not distributed is a Belgian who collects and comes here regularly. He leaves blankets, shoes, clothes in a room in Dunkirk and when he has foodstuffs he gives them to us. He came to Guérin several times to drop off pasta, milk, canned fish. Sometimes he distributes directly when there are enough of them to do so. »

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED US IN THE NAME OF A FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OR IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING ONE...

*Philip of "Bethlehem" has arrived more than once with his car full of bread.

*The parishioners of the church of Bergues, the only place where the boxes for the collection for exiles are there and continue to be filled week after week since Lent 2024!

A special thank you to the lady who every week drops off new socks she has just bought...

... and Marie-Christine who shuttles to empty the tills.

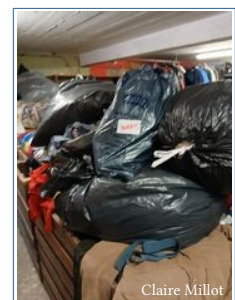
*On 1st December, the team of the Chapelle d'Armentières with whom a bond of friendship is now built.

*on 2nd December, a car full of donations from Emmaus Dunkerque-Tabgha. Thanks to Marie-Christine who did the transport with her car.

*on 4th December, at the same place, it was Ghislaine and Geneviève who, after washing up and tidying up, went to get supplies: oranges, bananas, apples, various fruits, endives, lettuce, tomatoes, plus four boxes of chickpeas and four boxes of frozen carrots.

*They were again the ones who called us on 18th December to give us a lot of bananas, plus oranges, clementines and yogurts...

*Also on the 4th, the association "Copain, copinettes" dropped off one hundred and fifty hats and scarves.



*That same week, several Emmaus communities from the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region arrived at our two sites, loaded like Santa Claus, and as reinforcements for our distributions.

*On December 6th, a scout patrol tent arrived through FTS (thanks to them too!) Don Christian de la ROQUE, Baptist pastor of the Church of Reconciliation in Lille, and a good batch of hats knitted by our faithful Régine D. and her friends.

*On the same day, Ursula brought back 180kg of pasta, two boxes of bread and ten boxes of fruit and vegetables from Emmaus St Omer.

*It was also she who brought back from the same community on the 27th five boxes of bananas, three boxes of mushrooms, two boxes of salad and a box of avocados.

*Maison Sésame also brought back food.

*On December 14th, Aftha, with the association "Help me" of Pontoise was back at the Calais office. In particular, he brought two pallets of jam jars, essential for the preparation of the exiles' breakfast.

*On 18th December, we received a lot of pastries, including the contribution of Nacer for the "Wati Smile" association.

*The same day, the Jesuit farm called us in the morning for a nice supply of vegetables: leeks, celery, pumpkins...

*And Eric from the OGS brought back a new batch of blankets gleaned by the parishioners of the Petite Chapelle Notre-Dame des Dunes. Thank you to Eric, thank you to Father Hochart!

*On 20th December, Arnaud made a round trip in the morning to the "GAEC des Sabots Communs" in Bourbourg to our friends Marie and Thomas. He came back with 300 kg of potatoes. If you want to know more about them: <https://fermedelahauteplanche.wordpress.com/> They sell their production, including bread, on a stall in the Halle Alimentaire in Dunkirk.

*On the same day, Nathalie brought back Audotri's donation.

*And Abdelkader, from the Coop de Grande-Synthe, gave us a donation of yoghurts.

*On 21st December, the Green Santa Claus of the Copains du Monde/Secours Populaire came to the Calais office to empty his hood.



Below is the thank you message we sent on 27th December:

"Thank you to the Green Santa Claus of the Secours Populaire for coming to the SALAM premises in Calais on 21st December with a full sack.

The elves-buddies-of-the-world had not been idle: they had sewn and filled small canvas bags with happiness kits that will be given to the exiles during the distribution of the New Year: a choker, a hat, a pair of gloves, a pair of socks, a pair of boxer shorts and some sweets to please these big children.

Thank you Santa Claus...

And on behalf of those of us who no longer believe in it, thank you to Christian, Caroline and the group of Friends, Bruno in the lead! »

*On 23rd December, the "Jardins de Cocagne" came to drop off a lot of vegetables.

*On 25th December, Dominique went to collect boxes of bananas promised by Emmaus Grande-Synthe,

* And also on 1st January, a round trip to the same place allowed us to enrich our provisions for the week.

*On December 27th, Ursula also brought back boxes of large waffles from the Bourdon Company.

*The distribution of 31st December fries, which has become a tradition since 2022, has been postponed this year to 1st January, with the association "Bonjour Désordre", and their friends: the smallest chip shop in the world.

They had prepared the day before, with the volunteers of Salam, at the Sesame House.

The meat was offered by the parish of Notre-Dame des Salines, with the money from the last three Christmas collections at the Saint-Jacques church, as last year. This time it was chicken nuggets... and in quantity.

Thank you to all those who contributed to making this moment joyful, in a context that is nevertheless very heavy...



Other photos and testimonies should arrive in the coming days and you will see them in our next issue.

AND FINALLY THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO GAVE US FINANCIAL DONATIONS, without which we would not be able to maintain the vans, put diesel in the tanks, pay for the water and electricity used in our premises, replace the gas bottles...

Thank you to all those (close friends and strangers) who slipped us a note, sent a cheque, made a transfer directly or through Helloasso.



THANK YOU TO BETHLEHEM, ABDELKADER AND THE RENAISSANCE ASSOCIATION, TO FLANDRES TERRE SOLIDAIRE, TO THE PROTESTANT MUTUAL AID, TO THE AUBERGE DES MIGRANTS who share with us the ton of bananas offered by CONHEXA once a week, to EMMAÜS who give us surpluses every week, to the Maison Sésame who shares with us two mornings a week the surplus fruit and vegetables from the ALDI store on the rue du Kruysbellaert,

to the Ressourcerie de Montreuil sur mer ("Il était deux fois") and to the Secours Catholique de Berck which provide every month clothes brought to Calais by André de Merlimont, to the Audotri association which regularly supports us with donations of clothes and blankets, to the OSE association which gives us a good quantity of clothes every week, to the Calais bakeries and those opposite the Noordover, "La mie du pain" and "Aux pains du Nord" in Coudekerque. Week after week, they are there to help us.

Thank you to the HRO, to Christine from Maisons Laffite, to Copains du Monde, to Nathalie Bardou, to Olivier Schitteck, to Tom de Roots, who allowed us to publish their photos.

THANK YOU to the diocesan association of Lille which, through the parish of Grande-Synthe, has been making the premises of the Salle Guérin available free of charge for more than fifteen years.

THANK YOU to Michel who has been ensuring the layout of this newsletter, without fail, for years, **to Chris** who translates it into English, month after month, for our website, **to Antoine who has been managing the Facebook Page**, also without fail, since 2017, **to Guillaume who introduced us to the LinkedIn network** three years ago, **and to Quentin who opened an Instagram account for Salam a little over a year ago:**
salam_calais_grandesynthe.

And I still ask forgiveness from all those who helped us in one way or another and whom I forgot, or who forgot to report to me...

Claire Millot

OUR NEEDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Dunkirk:

We need people on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from the beginning of the peeling chore (8 am) to the end of the dishes (between 2 and 4 pm). In between, we distribute the meal.

Call Claire (06 34 62 68 71).

Calais:

Salam continues to distribute improved breakfasts every morning with tea and coffee. But we are sorely lacking in volunteers, especially volunteers with driving licenses: Meeting at 7:45 am at the premises, 13 rue des Fontinettes.

Call Yolaine at 06.83.16.31.61.

CALL FOR DONATIONS

To drop off your donations in Calais, meet at 13 rue des Fontinettes, and call 06 83 16 31 61. And for Dunkirk, drop off your donations in the Salle Guérin, 1 rue Alphonse Daudet, behind the St Jacques church on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 am to 12 noon.

STOMACH IN HEELS?... CALL FOR DONATIONS!
THIS MONTH, THE NEED FOR FOOD IS STILL ACUTE.

There are still many exiles in our camps.

It is not easy to satisfy their appetites.

(see above in "Events of the month")

People are hungry.

We have trouble preparing enough food and in Calais they ask for flour to make their own pancakes...

CALL FOR DONATIONS:

For Calais: FLOUR, canned lentils, powdered sugar, jam, mayonnaise.

For Dunkirk:

Pasta, canned lentils and tomatoes, tomato paste, oil, cumin, raz el-hanout.

WITH THE COLD, THE NEED FOR WARM CLOTHES HAS ALSO INCREASED...

APPEL AUX DONS

La vague de froid que nous venons de traverser a fortement diminué nos stocks de vêtements chauds.

Nous recherchons en urgence :

- Vêtements chauds
- gants
- écharpes
- bonnets
- chaussures (40-44)
- couvertures
- Sacs de couchage

Chaque don compte !
Association SALAM Nord/Pas-de-Calais

And then... You can also make a cash donation...

MONEY NEEDS.

Without state subsidies and with a very significant reduction in subsidies from local and regional authorities, we still need money to make the association's work last:

Maintenance of premises and vans, fuel, purchase of missing foodstuffs...

Visit the association's website: www.associationsalam.org
section: "Support us"

Go through HELLOASSO:
<https://www.helloasso.com/associations/salam-nord-pas-de-calais/formulaires/2/widget>

or simply send a cheque to:
Association Salam
BP 47
62100 CALAIS

You are entitled to a 66% tax reduction on these donations, in cash by one of our volunteers, by cheque payable to SALAM, or by bank transfer (direct or by Helloasso)

A big thank you to all our generous donors!

TENTS AND TARPAULINS!

From dismantling to dismantling, the tents are being removed on both sites and we are unable to replace them. Many people sleep with nothing on them, in all weathers.

You can also buy tarpaulins, pieces of 3 m by 3 m (or 2.50 m by 3 m). They cost much less and allow an honest man to spend a night in shelter.

Otherwise, the most pressing needs at both sites:
BLANKETS (DUVETS, SLEEPING BAGS).

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The membership form for 2026 is attached to this mailing.

If you are not yet a member, do not hesitate to join us.
Whether you are an active volunteer or not, becoming a member gives the association the strength to the union! We were about 300 members in 2025, help us to keep or even exceed this number.

CONTACT US

<http://www.associationsalam.org>
salamnordpasdecalais@gmail.com
Facebook page: SALAM Nord/Pas-de-Calais
The LinkedIn page, which can be consulted at the following link :
www.linkedin.com/in/association-salam-nord-pas-de-calais
and the Instagram account: [salam_calais_grandesynthe](https://www.instagram.com/salam_calais_grandesynthe)

Association SALAM
13 rue des Fontinettes,
62100 CALAIS
BP 47
62100 CALAIS

Association SALAM,
Salle Guérin, Quartier St Jacques,
1, rue Alphonse Daudet,
59760 Grande-Synthe

Bulletin d'adhésion 2026



Principaux objectifs de SALAM :

- Apporter une aide humanitaire aux migrants (soins, hygiène, nourriture, vêtements...)
- Accompagner les migrants dans leur demande d'asile
- Informer et sensibiliser l'opinion publique sur la situation des migrants du littoral Côte d'Opale
- Combattre toutes les formes de racisme et de discrimination
- Agir dans les pays en difficulté
- Soutenir juridiquement les membres de l'association

Merci de remplir le bulletin ci-dessous et de le renvoyer à l'adresse suivante :

Association SALAM-Nord/Pas-de-Calais

BP 47

62100 CALAIS

Monsieur/Madame : _____ Prénom _____

Adresse _____

Code postal _____ Ville _____ Pays _____

Téléphone _____

E mail (important pour la convocation à l'AG) _____

☐ J'adhère à l'association en versant la somme de 10 €.

(5 € pour les étudiants et demandeurs d'emploi , adhésion valable jusqu'au 31/12/2026)

Date et signature :

☐ Je fais un don* à l'association Salam en versant la somme de : _____

**Par chèque à l'ordre de l'association Salam. Un reçu fiscal vous sera adressé*

☐ Je souhaite recevoir davantage d'informations sur l'association Salam.