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## FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

### EDITORIAL

**In February 2022, Jean-Claude Lenoir had already wrote in his "Message from the President", which is becoming more and more topical...**

There are many wars on our planet.  
Selfishly, very often we looked away.  
Our beautiful Western Europe would live in peace.  
Making a pact with the devil would spare us.  
It was to ignore human folly.  
Horror at our doorstep!

### EVENTS OF THE MONTH

#### DEATHS.

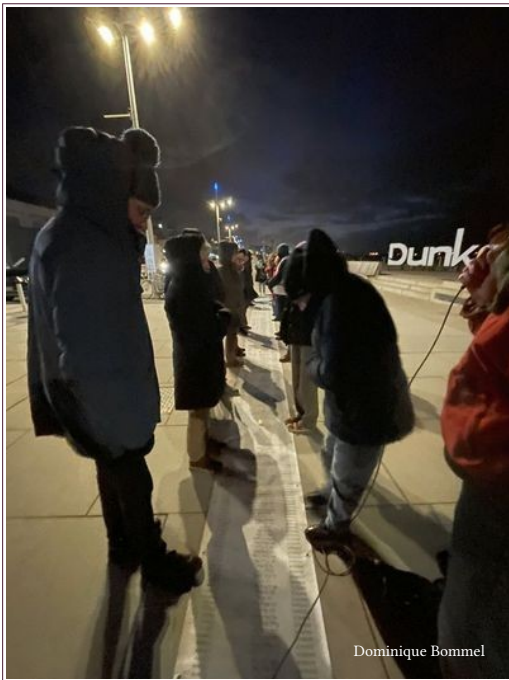
**Among our friends, there had already been three deaths in January 2025... There were seven at the end of February.**

On 4<sup>th</sup> February, a new sad piece of information came out, first announced by "Nord Littoral"....  
**The body of an exile had just been discovered on the side of the A16 (probably fallen from a truck).**

The traditional commemorations took place the following evening, 5<sup>th</sup> February, in Calais and the day after, 6<sup>th</sup> February, in Dunkirk.



On 6<sup>th</sup> February, we were between 20 and 30 on the Malo dike, in a line, in an icy wind, a wind that blocked the banner under our feet, the only way not to see it fly away.



We were cold, terribly cold... While waiting for the ceremony to begin, we had taken refuge in the shelter of the Kursaal wall, which cut us off.

I admit that I was tempted to stay there, sheltered from the wind, for the commemoration. But it was not right. We were there to think of a man who had fallen from a truck, and if he had fallen, it was because he was not inside... It had to be hung underneath or wedged between the cab and the trailer. And where he was, he must have been cold more so than we were... And it was probably because he was so cold, because his hands were frozen, that he finally let go...

6<sup>th</sup> February was the day of the international commemoration of the dead of the border, the anniversary of the 2014 tragedy.

And gathered at that time on this beach, we participated in this evocation.



*Reminder: On 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, more than 200 people, who left the Moroccan coast, tried to swim to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta. To prevent them from arriving on "Spanish soil", the Guardia Civil used anti-riot equipment and the Moroccan soldiers present did not rescue the people who were drowning in front of them. Fifteen bodies were found on the Spanish side, dozens of others disappeared, the survivors were turned back, some perished on the Moroccan side.*



**On the afternoon of 9<sup>th</sup> February, the bodies of two men were found**, one on the beach in Berck, the other a little later, in the water, near the same place. They are believed to have died while trying to reach a boat.

They died in Berck on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, not in the open sea, but on the shore,... a few steps from the many police officers who were watching over the smooth running of the Enduropale in the dunes. This means that they didn't see anything, they were looking away...

Of course, it is not a question of reproaching these men to whom another task had been entrusted... Just to notice that it is our whole society that looks the other way, that looks the other way when men die because we don't care about them, because we look away from the undignified living conditions in which we let them live... in which they are pushed away precisely, so as not to see them... even if it means letting them die there...

On 10<sup>th</sup> February, at 6.30pm at the Parc Richelieu in Calais, and the next day (11<sup>th</sup> February) at 6.30pm in front of the Kursaal on the Malo les Bains seawall, commemorations took place – to give them back some visibility – in memory of the deceased and in solidarity with the relatives of the victims of the border.



**On 15<sup>th</sup> February, one shipwrecked person could not be revived** : the ship "Abeille Normandie" and the "Minck" rescued 70 shipwrecked people in the Calais channel, only half of whom had a life jacket.

The usual commemorations took place on 16<sup>th</sup> February in Calais and on 17<sup>th</sup> February in Dunkirk.

Anger prevails over sorrow: there is no reason to imagine that the series will end there.

## **THE COLD WINTER AND SHELTERING.**

January had already brought its quota of frost... February reinforced this certainty: winter is here.

**In Dunkirk**, the gymnasium already open, several nights in January in Petite-Synthe reopened its doors for exiles, from Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> in the evening to Thursday morning of the following week (the 13<sup>th</sup>).

On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> at the end of the afternoon, we learned that this opening was extended until Tuesday morning (18<sup>th</sup>), then it was extended until the morning of Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>.

We are delighted with these decisions, but the Red Cross informed us on February 10<sup>th</sup> that the gymnasium was full on the last nights (on the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup>, 46 people had been turned away and at least 30 the next day) and that there was no possibility of going up beyond 110 people). Tension rose between the expelled exiles and the AFEJI, responsible for transporting them. Stones would have flown ...

Urgent measures were necessary, but no increase in reception capacity was decided.

The Mayor of Grande-Synthe, had nevertheless offered to open a gymnasium and reminded the sub-prefecture of his proposal, at our request. Thanks to him...

**In Calais** on 1<sup>st</sup> February, the fog was freezing, but it was not until the evening of Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> that the premises of the Great Cold Plan were reopened until Monday morning, 10<sup>th</sup> February.

A night was added on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> (it snowed during the day), but not on Tuesday evening or Wednesday.

On Tuesday evening, it was indeed quite mild, but it was raining heavily: a weather that would not put a dog outside...

On Wednesday, the wind strengthened during the day and it was very cold...

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>, the Calais Cold Weather Plan is open again until Tuesday morning (18<sup>th</sup> February) after these two days of interruption. As in Dunkirk, a last night has been added (until the morning of Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>).

On 18<sup>th</sup> February, the water point on Rue des Huttes was still frozen and therefore unusable. It is the only one accessible 24 hours a day to exiles from Calais. Salam bought bottles of water and filled the jerry cans in their possession at the tap, to distribute on the 18<sup>th</sup> and again on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> ..

Secondly, we have all been able to observe, in our two cities, a softening which undoubtedly makes the nights in the open air pleasant, in the eyes of our authorities!

In addition, we will be told, surely, that they can always go to shelter in CAES. But on 11<sup>th</sup> February, for example, the Salam team that distributes on rue des Huttes saw about twenty people turned away, for lack of space in the shuttle.....

## **THE PASSAGES FOR ENGLAND.**

Despite the cold and windy days, the attempts did not stop. At the bus stops of Dunkirk/Grande-Synthe, Auchan and Port Fluvial, to the west, many groups waited. In Calais, the number of breakfasts has increased, rising to around 500 since the beginning of the month, then to 700 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February. On 1<sup>st</sup> February we had to divert to buy bread to complete the breakfast of the day and the next day, on 17<sup>th</sup> February too...

The team sees a lot of new faces, surely arrived to try to make the passage.

Some obviously have no idea what awaits them: on 17<sup>th</sup> February, our team saw three men arrive, each carrying a suitcase...

On 28<sup>th</sup> February, there were 958 arrivals in the United Kingdom by small boat, recorded by the Home Office, on 19 dinghies.

In February 2024, they had counted 920 people arriving in the United Kingdom. Once again, we can see that all the obstacles put in place at the crossings are of little use: the number is not decreasing, on the contrary. 958 people on 19 dinghies. This is, on average, between 50 and 51 per dinghy, but this average does not make sense: we see successively 145 people on 2 dinghies on 5<sup>th</sup> February (72 and 73 people per dingy, it's frightening!) and 3 on a single dinghy on the 10<sup>th</sup> (a completely implausible figure, one wonders if there was not a mistake, unless a paddle could have been made. We know that this has been attempted quite recently, but it is hard to imagine three guys, clinging to a paddle, succeeding in the crossing – anyway – and even less so in this season without freezing to death...

In any case, not all of them succeed. The Calais team regularly comes across people in distress after a failure:  
\*On the 3<sup>rd</sup>, they are Kuwaitis, lost, disoriented, with a six-year-old boy; they haven't eaten anything for three days...

\*Further on, there is a group of Afghans, all dirty, one of them undressing completely on the road to put on dry clothes.

\*On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Quai de la Moselle, there is a group of men, hungry, dry but full of sand after a stay in the dunes in the hope of a passage...

\* It's the same thing on the 12<sup>th</sup>, in the same place, there are about 150 of them and a whole group is full of sand, dirt... The team in Salam's Wednesday afternoon locker room did not hesitate about the direction to take that day...

## **HALF-VICTORIES IN LITIGATION, OR ELSE THERE IS STILL AN INDEPENDENT JUSTICE SYSTEM IN FRANCE.....**

After our victory on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 at the Administrative Court of Lille, the Douai Court of Appeal (at the request of the State) was to rule on 6<sup>th</sup> February on **the prefectural decrees that prohibited the distribution of food in certain streets of the City Centre of Calais.**

The judgment is delivered, in principle, within two to three weeks of the hearing. But February ended without us receiving the answer.

The (already) half-victory for us lies in the fact that the public rapporteur, most often followed by the judge, intends to conclude that the appeal request, initiated by the Minister of the Interior, should be "rejected on the merits".

The public rapporteur's mission is to set out publicly, and in complete independence, his opinion on the issues to be judged by the applications and on the solutions, they call for.

In October 2022, in the first instance, the public rapporteur had already been very favourable to the associations and had been followed by the judge.

We then learned on the morning of 10<sup>th</sup> February from the PSM that **the exiled applicants had won the dispute against the Calais town hall about the eviction under the bridges** : the town hall had filed a request for summary proceedings to obtain the eviction of the Faidherbe and Mollien bridges and the Quai de la Gironde, in the city centre, under the pretext of dignity. Exiles were applicants, and the associations could only support them, which is what we did. The hearing took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. On 10<sup>th</sup> February, we learned of the court's decision: The town hall does not have the right to evict. She has two weeks to appeal.

This is only a partial victory, because if the town hall cannot carry out a total evacuation with use of buses and material closure of the sites, as we saw in January 2021,( our archive picture), it can continue to dismantle, as in other places in the city... and indeed on the following day of evacuation (Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February), 28 people were still displaced from under the Pont Mollien, a tent was seized under the Pont Faidherbe on 14<sup>th</sup> February... and it continues.....





## THE DISMANTLING.

Indeed, it is better to sleep under a bridge on a concrete floor than under a tarpaulin in the mud and rain. So how can we explain that it is these areas that are currently threatened with eviction, under the pretext of indignity, while the situation of those who live in vacant lots is much more undignified?

Probably because those who sleep under the bridges are in the city centre and therefore more visible, impossible to ignore, for those who come as tourists or for business...

In any case, the dismantling continues as it has for a few months, three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

However, 13<sup>th</sup> February was a Thursday, and at the camp at exit 44 there was a real evacuation with about 50 people on a bus, in the direction of the CAES in Croisilles.

A little after 10 a.m. there were only 3 people left on the site...

That day we received a message from a couple of volunteers from Dunkirk, who happened to be passing by: "We saw: The police were blocking the roundabout, what a deployment of the Police!" Indeed, the number of law enforcement agencies is disproportionate to the number of people they move...

The photo of 7<sup>th</sup> February on the quays of Calais shows the column of CRS (13 vans moved) for a seizure of 5 tents at that location (and four on another site). The police never come to the "hangar" where the largest number of exiles are located (on 7<sup>th</sup> February we gave 380 breakfasts out of a total of 461).



On that day, the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) also saw the reappearance of shields and LBDs...

Intimidation is a weapon that is widely used in the dismantling of the country.

Arrests are not exceptional (in photo: exit 44, on 14<sup>th</sup> February).

The situation was rarely tense (the exiles endured with astonishing patience the movements demanded by the police), even if it did: on 14<sup>th</sup> February, at exit 44 of the A16, Tension rose between the exiles and the police, but the interpreters were no longer there, reports the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ).

The rule given by the authorities is always: "The tents picked up, are those that are abandoned", which means in practice that if the owner of the tent is not present in or next to it, it is picked up.

This is already abusive: it often happens that the owner has gone to a shower or to a meal distributed by La Vie Active (two services managed and financed in Calais by the State) or that he tries to cross to England... When he returns, his equipment is gone.

But one thing worries us a lot: this month, this rule is not even always respected:

On 5<sup>th</sup> February, under the Pont Mollien, two people present had their tent taken: both were evicted and had not been able to recover it.

On 21<sup>st</sup> February, HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) heard people shouting during a tent seizure: "Please my friend, I just want to sleep ". Another person says, "This is my tent that they are taking."

On the 24<sup>th</sup> February, a person emptied his tent on the Quai de la Meuse, he was immediately seized. However, on 28<sup>th</sup> February in the city centre, a person managed to get his tent back from the police and the cleaning team.



The seizure of tents is done without any respect for the equipment. Moreover, there is never any question of the possibility of recovery at the Ressourcerie. The tents are dragged on the ground (in the photo at the Courgain stadium on 12<sup>th</sup> February ), the hoops walk around (photo of 7<sup>th</sup> February rue de Judée)...

Simple decency would dictate that the equipment left behind should be respected at a minimum:

- that what is removed from the tents as "personal belongings" is not thrown in the air like dirt, as we see on a video by the HRO on 5th February, Quai de la Meuse.



- that what cleaners on a ladder pull from a hiding place under the deck of a bridge be left there, once they have determined that they are not hidden tents. The opposite happened on 19th February.





- that a mattress should not be used as a doormat: on 17th February, on rue de Judée, the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) saw an interpreter wiping his feet on a mattress. If it has not been collected, it is because it has been deemed still worthy of use...

One might also expect that the shelter of a disabled person would be spared:  
On 19th February, at the Courgain East stadium, a large hut was destroyed: it was the shelter of a disabled person (in the photo of the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) we can clearly see his wheelchair).



We would also sometimes like a little less zeal during evacuations: on 26th February, a video by the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) shows two cleaning agents who make a short ladder to grab a tent hidden under the deck of the Pont Mollien. But probably we shouldn't dream...



The Human Rights Observers always questions the security forces about the legal basis of the operations and their justifications. But it is understandable that they are ordered to keep quiet, because they lack a minimum of legal training (which is not their task) and they sometimes say stupid things:

On 12th February, in Marck, a police officer confused illegal presence in a private place (illegal occupation of someone else's land) with illegal presence in France (illegal stay).

On 14th February, in Marck, a video of the HRO ( Human Rights Observers ) recorded a discussion with the CRS because two people were allowed to pass the perimeter and they were not: the HRO was blocked "because they are part of an association," said a police officer. "A filter barrier is forbidden by law," replies the HRO member. This is logical: a "security" perimeter is made to protect people during a police operation (both those who work inside and the curious); Sorting out those who can pass the cord and those who can't makes no sense...

Let us remember an observation heard on rue de Judée on 12th February from the mouth of a CRS: "It's not the mission we prefer".

**On the Dunkirk side**, there had been no dismantling since the one on 27 January.

But on February 20, at 8 a.m., we learned that at least eight CRS Republican Security Corps vans had arrived in the Total area. Two police officers wear LBDs. They were joined by two people from the Brigade for the Repression of Banditry, a backhoe loader and a large van..

The evacuation apparently only concerned this area.

The police announced that they had been taken to safety. Indeed, a bailiff is there and there has been an AFEJI bus since about 8:30 am. Another succeeds him at around 9:20 am.







Fifty people came on their own, including two minors. At least thirty people are waiting at the entrance to the Total site to resettle.

The HRO Human Rights Observer, notes at least three arrests..

**TO END ON A POSITIVE NOTE:**

The land of the distribution site had become a field of mud from week to week. Salam had intervened with the CUD and had obtained a promise of a truck of sand on 24<sup>th</sup> January.



It took almost a month, but it is much better than expected: an agreement has been reached between the CUD and the Port for more substantial work.

A day of work has been scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> February to raise the distribution and care area by 10 cm of stones and the result is superb..

Many thanks to the Director General of the Urban Community of Dunkirk.

***Claire Millot.***

***SALAM NORD/PAS DE CALAIS IS IN MOURNING***

**Martine Clais, a volunteer at Salam in Calais, died on 12<sup>th</sup> February.**

She was part of the afternoon team in Calais, one of the team who sort or make soup, in the shadows. She came there two or three times a week.

We hadn't seen her for almost a year, stopped by illness, but despite everything, she continued to knit hats for our friends and gather warm clothes. She would drop everything off discreetly and regularly, in front of Yolaine's door.

Our sorrow is added to that of her loved ones...

## LEAVING CALAIS ...

Leaving Calais to breathe easier  
To see smiles again  
So as not to suffocate, with shame and anger.

Going far away to find yourself  
To believe in life again.  
So as not to suffocate  
with rage and sadness.

Coming back to Calais again and again.  
Because it's impossible not to see what's going on.  
Impossible to be silent,  
It is impossible to do nothing.

Calais, city of shame,  
Calais, city of combat,  
Calais the sorrowful,  
Calais a part of me.

*Ferri Matheeuwsen (volunteer in Salam), 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2025..*

## FEAST OF FRATERNITY

**ON 5<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY, THE "FEAST OF FRATERNITY" TOOK PLACE IN GRANDE-SYNTHÉ.**

Christians call themselves brothers, Muslims call themselves brothers, among themselves. These are "cousin" religions, the religions "of the book" (the Bible). The third is the Jewish religion, it is little represented in Grande-Synthe, but in this period of renaissance of anti-Semitism, including in France, we cannot not think about it, we cannot not associate it...

But beyond these religious frameworks, in the strictest secularism, all men are brothers. The Fraternity is inscribed in the French constitution, it has also been (for much longer) on the pediment of our town halls. This is the reason why this international day was established by the UN in December 2020, on 4<sup>th</sup> February of each year (forgive us for this day difference...)

Antonio Guterres, then secretary-general of the UN, said:

*"We must come together to protect and uphold human rights, counter hate speech and violent extremism, and stand up to those who exploit fear."*

The Steering Committee of the "Hospitalité Saint Joseph" project (or more simply "the Copil Saint Joseph") is part of this perspective and has set itself the goal, of bringing this place to life (I quote the founding charter)

*with any person who is destitute, in precarious situations or in exile and anyone who is in solidarity with them.*

Salam has been part of it since the beginning.

This is why about sixty people gathered around these strong messages with the speeches of the St Joseph steering committee, Mr. Jean-Marie Atmaer, Dean of our TA, representing the Catholic community, Mr. Al Bourki, representing the Muslim community, Mr. Martiel Beyaert, mayor of Grande-Synthe and Mrs. Karima Touil, elected for international relations in the city.





The street food of "La Petite Pierre" then brought together all those who wished to do so around a delicious chicken soup in the meeting room of the Saint Joseph church.

*Claire Millot.*

### ***ADVOCACY FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES***

For associations and NGOs ( non government organizations ) that welcome and support refugees and asylum seekers, the signals that can have an impact on government decisions, and on the processing of pending cases, are being carefully scrutinized. It is better to anticipate changes so as not to be caught off guard and to face events. The future of thousands, sometimes millions, of lives is at stake. The cookie-cutter decisions of the administration, taking advantage of a troubled geopolitics to harden the reception and asylum conditions of communities suddenly considered safe, must be carefully monitored.

The year 2025 began as the year 2024 ended - in a major geopolitical destabilization. The fall of Bashar Al Assad's regime on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2024 was the most surprising element, for laymen but also for specialists. Dorothee Schmid, head of the Turkey and Middle East programme at the French Institute of International Relations, expresses it very well (1). The Syrian dictator's regime was an "empty shell", artificially endorsed by the Arab League, which rallied to the "pseudo-solution agreed by the leading trio Russia-Iran-Turkey, which cynically shared the spoils of a bleeding country". Cynicism is the word that comes to mind when we know that Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, has granted political asylum to his Syrian ally, his family and friends, for "humanitarian reasons".

Bashar Al Assad and his clan have benefited from an investigation of their case in conditions that would be appreciated by the 3 million Syrians thrown into exile by the dictator and which has caused the death of 150,000 people, not to mention the persecution of its population for more than fifty years (2). Russian military and political support is not disinterested. Four years after the start of the civil war in Syria (2011), the country has benefited from unwavering support from Russia (since September 2015). Russian planes have transported the Assad clan several times with considerable sums of money. According to the NGO Global Witness, which specialises in the fight against the plundering of natural resources and corruption, prominent members of an allied family (the Makhlof), placed under US and European sanctions, own 38 million euros in real estate in Moscow's business district, "Moscow City". Between 2018 and 2019, Bashar Al Assad sent two tons of banknotes worth \$250 million through the Central Bank of Syria (3). Companies have been created to manage this massive embezzlement of money to the detriment of the Syrian people. They were sometimes coordinated from Lebanon, whose leaders have become specialists in the large-scale embezzlement of public money and money laundering (4).

HTC fighters, architects of the fall of the Assad clan, allowed journalists from Agence France-Presse (AFP) in 2024 to discover millions of Captagon tablets (containing amphetamine) in Syrian military hangars and warehouses that had become an illicit drug whose production and export, organized and directed by the regime of Bashar Al-Assad, have turned Syria into a narco-state (5). Iran's support for the Assad clan may have fostered a rapprochement with the Shiite terrorist militia it supports, Hezbollah in Lebanon, which practices the same drug trafficking and money laundering activities..

Another scourge of Syria, of which Syrian refugees were the first victims, was the development of international terrorism. According to researcher Hugo Micheron, holder of the Chair of Excellence in the Middle East and the Mediterranean at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, who has investigated jihadism in France and abroad (6), there have been three phases of departure of fanatical Europeans to Syria that have followed the evolution of the Syrian crisis. The country entered a civil war in the summer of 2011. A year later, in 2012, the conflict became confessional; the opposition to Bashar Al Assad became jihadized with a group affiliated with Al Qaeda which broke with Daesh (Islamic State) in 2013. In 2014, this group, which had become autonomous, proclaimed the caliphate, which reached its peak in 2016 before collapsing in the summer and disappearing in 2019, leaving thousands of European jihadists in the country.

In 2025, Syria is under special surveillance by Western intelligence services that do not like uncertainty. The Islamic State has been defeated but hopes to rebuild its forces. For the director of the French foreign service (DGSE), the fall of the Al Assad regime raises three questions (7). The first is the contingent of a hundred French jihadists, and judicialized, who are operating freely in northeastern Syria. The second question is the fate of hundreds of adults and as many minors, incarcerated for terrorism and monitored by the Kurdish forces, faithful and effective allies of the Europeans and the Americans in the fight against terrorism. The last point is the attitude of the new Syrian regime towards the Islamic State, which is for the moment a declared enemy. For researcher Hugo Micheron, the European jihadists who left for Syria in 2012 were "ideologized pioneers" invested in the cause since the early 2000s, leaving with paramilitary equipment, taking themselves "builders of a new moral order in Syria, a territory where to impose Sharia law and their Salafi-jihadist way of life" against Syrians. first victims of this imported terrorism. "It was anything but humanitarian," adds Hugo Micheron, like the rescue of the Syrian dictator by the Russian president.

As soon as the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime was announced on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2024, several European countries that have been hosting Syrians brutally driven from their countries since 2011 by multiple threats, announced the freezing of asylum application procedures and are considering a return of refugees to their countries - Germany, the leading host country (47,000 pending cases), Denmark, Sweden, Norway and France (8). This haste is surprising as the country is in ruins after 14 years of civil war (2011-2024) with a population martyred by more than 50 years of dictatorship of the Assad clan (1970-2025), and an absence of Western delegations since 2012 leaving the field open to states more concerned with their interests than those of Syria (Russia, Iran, Turkey, Qatar). For Manon Nour Tannous, a doctor in Franco-Syrian international relations, the Baathist revolution of 1963 that brought the Assad clan to power in 1970 seemed irreversible and eternal (9). With the fall of the regime in December 2024, "The challenges are immense and the future uncertain. Yet this uncertainty, instead of eternity, changes everything."

The European Union decided to end the sanctions imposed on Syria on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (10). This is a source of hope. Syrian asylum seekers and refugees in Europe need time to return to a stable and safe country. Geopolitical chaos is often fertile ground for terrorists and predatory states. Syrians abroad need more time to decide, calmly and unhurriedly, to return to their country..

***Dr Bénédicte Halba, présidente de l'IRIV ([www.iriv.net](http://www.iriv.net)), February 2025***

*Bénédicte Halba directs a research institute (iriv) that has been working on the theme of migration since 2003, she has led a club at the Cité des Métiers for a migrant public (2012-2022) and published a weblog dedicated to migration (2024)- <https://actions-migration.blogspot.com/> .*



(1) Dorothee Schmid "The reversal of the situation in Syruce puts the West face to face with its responsibilities", Le Monde, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024

(2) Isabelle Mandraud "Putin's refugee", Le Monde, 25th & 26th December 2024

(3) revelations in the Financial Times of 15th December 2024

(4) the former governor of the Lebanese central bank (1993-2023) Ryad Salamé was indicted in September 2024 after several international arrest warrants issued by the French justice system and Interpol. The international firm Kroll has recorded transactions worth \$8 billion (€7.2 billion) between 2015 and 2018 from the Lebanese bank's cash registers to a company managed by a close associate of Salamé. Hélène Sallon, Le Monde, 4th September, 2024.

(5) blog by Marc Gozlan, medical and scientific journalist, [16th December 2024](#), "Captagon, the illicit drug that has transformed Syria into a narco-state", hosted by the Le Monde website.

(6) Interview with Hugo Micheron "Jihadists are at ease in territorial and community isolation", Le Monde, 7th January 2020

(7) Interview with Nicolas Lerner, interview by Christophe Ayad, Le Monde, Tuesday, January 14th, 2025

(8) Editorial in Le Monde, "Syrian refugees: the shocking haste of European countries", 13th December 2024

(9) Manon-Nour Tannous, "The challenges of Syria after eternity", Le Monde, 22nd & 23rd December 2024

(10) Le Monde editorial "Europe's bet in Syria", Thursday 30th January 2025

*THANK YOU*

## THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS

**to regular volunteers,**

in preparations, distributions (in photos the one in Calais on 6<sup>th</sup> February),



## To visiting volunteers:

PS from Geneviève to the CR of Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> February:

"The joy of this day is the volunteers welcomed: very active and willing that we will see again on occasion for a helping hand, an internship...

They seemed surprised +, by our motivations, passion, joy (in the morning!) atmosphere ...

Geneviève speaks of six people who arrived in the morning from the Maison Sésame, **including three from Emmaus Niort (with the addition of Olivier's return with his wife and child) and three new young people sent by the AFEV).**

**to those of the other associations (Help 4 Dunkerque, Roots) who gave a hand on difficult days to manage the queue..**

**to those who work overtime when there is a need for people,**

Guy, the 6<sup>th</sup>

Guy, Joseph and Ursula on the 17<sup>th</sup>, because there were not enough people to provide the usual service.

Dominique, always willing to come and drive the truck, for example on the 7<sup>th</sup> (accompanied by Sandrine) for the donation of containers from Emmaus Saint Martin in Laert (see below) and on 15<sup>th</sup> February for the Emmaus collection, a day when the kitchen team was freed up thanks to the presence of Stand by you..

**To those who cook on Tuesday mornings, since Philippe's retirement on 1<sup>st</sup> January:**

This month:

Juciara, Geneviève, Amélie...

And a special thank you to the members of FTS who take turns to be present as much as possible every week: Hubert, Geneviève, Elizabeth, Charline, Véronique, Patrick...

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

**Food donations:**

\* the ladies of Lens who came to Calais on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, in view of Ramadan, with spread, milk, water...

\*cans of sardines from a generous gentleman who wishes to remain anonymous, brought to Grande-Synthe on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

\*the Arras team, led by Basma, who brought back on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February a full load with a lot of food (Djamila, Amina, Lafissa, Bahija and Bader):

In the photo, the donations deposited in the basement of the Guérin room before a systematic tidying up in which their team was also fully invested.



**Textile donations:**

\*A gentleman dropped off duvets, blankets and clothes on Saturday February 8<sup>th</sup>.

\*Florence arrived with a beautiful batch of blankets on 21<sup>st</sup> February.

\*Clothes were sent by Jacques, the parish priest of Cappelle, on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> February,

\*the same day, those of a gentleman sent by Our Lady of Peace arrived,

\*Men's clothes of a parishioner of the church of St Jacques were deposited on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>.



\*And we received warm jackets in the parcels of Jean-Guillaume de Reims, which Joseph picked up at Mondial Relay on 20<sup>th</sup> February as well.

\*Dominique and her husband came from La Rochelle on 17<sup>th</sup> February with a van full of blankets (it had been around the hotels) and warm clothes.

They also brought about forty jars of fig jam (homemade).



Guy Dequeker



Claire Millot

\*Another spectacular donation was the load brought by Rita on 6<sup>th</sup> February, with the help of Guy and the "Sound of Sudan" association who provided her with the van and the driver.

Here is Rita's message sent a few days before: "I'm in the middle of a collection and it's a huge success: way too much for three cars!! Several associations have joined in: Amnesty, SOS (Sudanese Association), the CRDTM, Robin des bio..."

Pictured: its loading before departure and on arrival.

Thanks to Rita, who also made a point of distributing the food with us before leaving, and to Guy who immediately made a trip to Emmaus with what is not suitable for a camp.

**And also:** Anne-Marie came on 22<sup>nd</sup> February to drop off French books for the French classes taught under Annie's guidance in our premises.

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

**L'association Audotri :**

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> , Ursula brought back clothes, shoes, blankets and duvets.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February , Nathalie also collected Audotri's donations.

**Emmaus France**, visiting Calais on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

**Emmaus Niort: three people visiting on 27<sup>th</sup> February**, from the Maison Sésame.

**Emmaus Saint-Martin-au-Laert gave Ursula 43**

boxes of containers for us on 7<sup>th</sup> February.

Thank you to Dominique and Sandrine who provided transport.

This is a great saving for Salam's finances!

They also collected bananas for the next day's milk shake and clementines.



Dominique Prost



Dominique Prost

**Emmaus St Omer**, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, gave Ursula four boxes of fruit.

**The EPID had collected blankets.** On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. R. came to bring them.

**The Jardins de Cocagne (of the AFEJI) regularly bring us organic vegetables** that greatly improve the quality of our preparations.

\*Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> February , 118 kg of various vegetables, stored directly and correctly in the basement and in the fridges.

\*Thursday , 27<sup>th</sup> February, a new arrival of beautiful vegetables.

**The Secours Populaire/Copains du Monde, behind Christian Hogard, Caroline and their team, in particular Bruno and Evelyne.**

Here are: our thank you messages:

*The one on 9<sup>th</sup> February:*

"Thank you friends of the world,

thank you for the bread and pastries brought this weekend to Calais. The State is currently offering shelter for the night until tomorrow morning, but no breakfast... Our friends are very lucky to have us (you and us)...

Thank you! »

*The one on 11<sup>th</sup> February:*

A pallet and a half of blankets is a nice gift anyway, but even more so on the day we learn that the Great Cold Plan (open since the night of Thursday to Friday) will be closed in the evening. Of course it's milder, but it's raining heavily, a weather that you don't want to put a dog outside,

a dog NO but a "migrant", YES...

Thanks to you, they will be a little less cold.

Thank you for them first.

*The one of 21<sup>st</sup> February:*

Thank you once again for the contribution of bread and pastries made by the Copains du Monde this week.

Once again, it came at a great time: we went up to 700 breakfasts again, and without you the situation would have been much more difficult for our exiled friends.

On behalf of the whole team, THANK YOU!

**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 everyone (close friends and strangers) who slipped us a note, sent a cheque, made a transfer directly or through Helloassos.

A special thank you

\*to Monika, a friend of my sister's, who was looking to please her and found a way to do so: "to make a donation to (her) sister's association"!

\*to the anonymous donor who financed the repair of the shutters of the façade of our Calais premises, after an episode of vandalism.





**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 tonne of bananas offered by CONHEXA once a week, to EMMAÛS who give us surpluses every week, for Calais as well as for Grande-Synthe, to the Maison Sésame who shares with us two mornings a week the surplus fruit and vegetables from the ALDI store from the rue du Kruysbellaert, to the Ressourcerie de Montreuil sur mer ("Il était deux fois") and to the Secours Catholique de Berck which provide each month clothes brought to Calais by André de Merlimont, to the Calais bakeries and to those opposite the Noorderover, "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 Human Rights Observers, Dominique Bommel, Diane from MDM, Mario Deneyer, 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 about 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 Quentin who opened an Instagram account for Salam since May** (salam\_calais\_grandesynthe).

*And I ask forgiveness from all those who helped us in one way or another and whom I forgot, or who were forgotten 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 a.m.) to the end of the dishes (between 2 and 4 p.m.). In between, we distribute the meal.

Call Claire (06 34 62 68 71). From outside France 00 33 6 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 a.m. at the premises, 13 rue des Fontinettes.

Call Yolaine at 06.83.16.31.61. From outside France 00 33 6 83 16 31 61

### **CALL FOR DONATIONS**

#### **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](http://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) (please check your local tax laws)

*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 2.50m by 3m). 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).

**men's clothing** from XS to XL: underpants, long johns underpants and thermal leggings and thermal sweaters, socks, jogging pants, jeans, shorts, t-shirts,

MEN'S SHOES: trainers or light hiking boots (sizes 40 to 46),

flip/flops, sandals, caps

backpacks,

lamps and batteries,

water packs,

bags (small backpacks, garbage bags, freezer bags, shopping bags and plastic bags)

### **Food for Calais:**

JAM and MAYONNAISE,

Milk

tea and sugar, instant coffee,

cookies (or pastries, or cake bars or pound cakes etc...)

To drop off your donations, go to 13 rue des Fontinettes, and call 06 83 16 31 61.

### **And for Grande-Synthe:**

Especially canned vegetables of all kinds (we receive much less fresh produce for some time),

bags of pulses, pasta, rice.

Drop off your donations in the Salle Guérin, 1 rue Alphonse Daudet, behind the church of St Jacques on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m..

***CALL FOR CONTRIBUTION***

The membership form for 2025 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 more than 250 members in 2024, help us to exceed the 300 threshold.

## CONTACT US

<http://www.associationsalam.org>

[salamnordpasdecalais@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.linkedin.com/in/association-salam-nord-pas-de-calais)

and the brand new Instagram account: [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 2025

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

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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 31/12/2025)

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.

"Au regard de la loi n°78-17 du 6 janvier 1978 relative à l'informatique, aux fichiers et aux libertés, l'association s'engage à ne pas utiliser les données à des fins commerciales. Quant à l'adhérent ou donateur, il peut exercer son droit de regard et de rectification concernant ses données personnelles conformément au RGPD en vigueur depuis le 25 mai 2018"