



SCONFINATI PRESS

EDITORIAL

APRILE 2012

This aperiodic Free Press was born as one of the actions envisaged by the project NOT ONLY FOR ASYLUM 3, a project co-funded by the European Union and the Ministry of Interior, European Refugee Fund 2008-2013 in Turin.

What you are reading is a preview of what will be the Free Press, a few pages, a work in progress that we have decided to publish to give substance to the idea, to make it alive.

The idea is to try and create a "laboratory" of people with the status of "refugee" or "asylum seekers" interested in working together to build a communication tool that gives voice to those who, for several reasons, are forced to leave their countries in order to land, amid thousand difficulties, in Italy.

We think of a newspaper, addressed at the same time to the refugees and to the Italians, where it is possible to publish articles written and conceived by those who directly live this condition.

We believe it is important there is a newspaper in which other Refugees may find information needed to live the city that hosts them, where they can read about the paths of inclusion that others, before them, have faced. Furthermore, we believe it is equally important that the "Italians" understand what happens in the fled countries, what it means to face such a long and dangerous journey, what are the difficulties and problems that people seeking asylum face every day in our country.

The challenge of this "laboratory" is to create a "half-cast" editorial staff consisting of Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Cultural Mediators and Italian operators, who, supported by the web site "Vie di Fuga" (the permanent observatory on Refugees), manage to create a publication. That publication will become a container of experiences, information, intercultural actions and above all is aimed to be a useful tool to open horizons UN / CONFINED for a world WITHOUT BORDERS.

The Editorial Staff

MY LIFE IN SOMALIA



My name is Fartun and I was born in 1987 in Mogadishu. I studied in the town of Beledweyne and later, from February 2004, I worked in the radio "Voice of Hiran." I broadcast news and I also had a program dedicated to children.

I was happy with my work, but unfortunately the members of a group known as Al Shabab were not happy about me. They never wanted a woman working as a journalist, because it is conflicting with their religion.

I never wanted to leave my job, and for this reason I have been kidnapped, blindfolded and taken to an unidentified location.

Every morning they hit me with ten lashes. They promised to kill me. To prove to me

that they would kill me, they beheaded someone who had been kidnapped like me and they took me his head. I have been prisoner for two weeks. My parents and my children did not know where I was. Early one morning, at about three and a half, I ran away from a window. My life was threatened, so I decided to leave Somalia. I went to Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and later, at the end, I arrived in Libya. I worked as a cleaner and I tried to leave Libya for Italy in 2010. I was arrested by the army of Gaddafi. When I left Somalia I was pregnant, so when I was arrested I was with my child.

I was taken to a detention camp and stayed there for eight months. Later, I paid a thousand dollars for being released. When I got out of jail, I decided to send my son in Somalia through a person I knew and who was traveling.

My dream of coming to Europe took place at dawn on 17 February 2011. I boarded a fishing boat going to Italy and spent four days and four nights in the sea, without food or water. We were about 250 people; thirty were children under one year. The day before reaching Italy, our boat was pretty damaged, and suddenly we saw an Italian fishing boat that alerted the Navy, which came immediately, with three ships to help us.

We stayed three days in Lampedusa and then we were moved to Caratoni in Sicily.

We spent 30 days in Caratoni, then we were relocated to Racconigi, near Turin. I stayed there eight months and then I was transferred to the Settimo Torinese, at the Hotel Giglio, where I live now. In the Hotel Giglio I got the chance to participate to an Italian language class. It takes an hour time from the Hotel to the school.

Life here is not the best, but it's bearable.

Fartun (Somalia)



Nigeria, which is known as one of the richest nations in Africa, is collapsing under the weight of oil subsidies and the religious wars between Christians and Muslims. As a consequence, many people are homeless while others are due to return to their villages and states of origin. Those who were unable to return fled into neighboring countries looking for hospitality and greener pastures.

Up to today, thousands have been killed in Nigeria because of these crises, and many other people were brutally injured and left to die in the street. Those who left the country to the lands of hope, to travel overseas, were trapped by the Libyan crisis, when many Nigerians lost their lives.

Many Nigerians have lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea, trying to cross it in search of a shelter overseas. Only a few of them have succeeded. Today Nigeria, which allegedly is a democratic country (Government of the People), is the government of "who knows who" (Government of people knowing other people), and the poor masses are starving. As a result of this great injustice, armed bands of marauders have started shooting everywhere looking for someone to rob.

A group of people, known as Boko Haram emerged from nowhere terrorizing the whole country. Boko Haram is a jihadist terrorist organization based in the north-east of Nigeria. It is an Islamist organization that is



opposed to man-made laws. Founded in 2001 by Mohamed Yusuf, the organization is an Islamic sect that seeks to abolish the secular system of government and to establish the sharia law in the country. Boko Haram has been known at international level for the first time in 2009, following the religious violence in Nigeria.

Nigeria had just survived a group known as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

MEND is one of the major militant groups in the Delta region. The organization claims to expose the exploitation and oppression of the people of the Niger Delta and the

devastation of natural resources, by the public and private partnership between the Government of Nigeria and the corporations involved in the oil extraction of the area. The chronicles report that MEND was fighting to get the total control of the oil wealth of the Delta, arguing that local populations are excluded from the wealth of the subsoil and its waterways. The government has remained silent over this situation and this has led many people to think of leaving the country to look for a refuge and a better future. "Nigeria is a hell, and only God's intervention can remedy," wrote a reporter.

D. Ehis (Nigeria)

THE SILENCE THAT KILL CONGO

The Democratic Republic of Congo is the richest country in the world for natural resources: diamonds, gold, silver, cobalt, columbite, tantalum, copper, zinc, manganese, uranium, malachite, gas, oil ... In central Africa, with its 2,345,500 square km, the Democratic Republic of Congo is the second African country after Algeria for the territorial extension. It borders with nine countries, including Angola, Zambia, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Central African Republic and Congo Brazzaville, her twin sister. The Democratic Republic of

Congo has a coastline of 36 km along the Atlantic coast.

In 1885, before the Berlin conference, Congo, given its geographical position, has been an area of international traffic, for the common good of the West. After the Berlin Conference, Congo became the private property of King Leopold II, who used the hands and the energies of the natives for the cultivation, mainly rubberwood. Congolese worked for the king, a foreign king, and those who could not produce the required amount were punished with the amputation

of a hand according to what had been arranged by the king.

Yes, it was the second shock, which lasted 75 years, for this innocent population, after the slave trade. Three years after the independence of Congo, Belgium and the United States sowed chaos in the country, organizing the death of Lumumba, who was considered a

communist even by the UN that blessed his killing. In 1965 General Mobutu replaced violently President Kasa Vubu, with the blessing of the United States, Belgium and France. He established a dictatorial and tyrannical regime that would last 32 years - third trauma - until May 17, 1997, when appeared another puppet, Laurent Désiré Kabila. Kabila was aided by the same forces that supported Mobutu, and got the African endorsement of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi: it has been possible to depose Mobutu to establish another dictator - the fourth trauma. Years later, Kabila cut the links with those countries to help his people. He was killed on 16 January 2001 by its owners / masters with the complicity of some of his relatives and his 29 year old adopted son, who succeeded him and established himself a tyrannical regime, halfway between the one of Mobutu, and the one of Kagame. Joseph Kabila regime still lasts, as you read this article and is supported by France, Belgium and the United States. This can be considered as the fifth-trauma to the 70 million Congolese, who are tortured, raped and killed; the only right they still have is the silence of the death or the death in silence. These are the 127 years of suffering of my people because of its wealth.

M.N.G. (Rep. Democratica del Congo)



The following article, "Life of the refugees at the Hotel Giglio" is a fairly crude description, an inside look on the living conditions inside the Reception Centers addressed to asylum seekers in Italy. The described reality, in fact, goes beyond the specific case of the Hotel Giglio and, by extension, could probably cover most of the structures that exist today.

This article imposes, especially to us, the operators, to make deep analysis concerning the lines that guide the assistance to refugees and their (lacking?) effectiveness in terms of real integration in the hosting countries. This reflection could start from a reply by the agencies managing the facilities of Settimo Torinese.

Unfortunately, our offer to give them a right of reply and host on the pages of Un / Confined their response to this article was not taken. It is a shame, as we are sure that it would have offered the readers a clearer picture about the scarcity of resources in which those working in favor of refugees operate. In addition, such a contribution would have given the chance to deeply analyze the general crisis of the welfare state, which is probably even more violent on people who have fled wars and persecution, arriving in our country totally devoid of support networks.

THE LIVES OF THE REFUGEES AT THE HOTEL GIGLIO

Refugees are victims of circumstances beyond their control, a fact often forgotten. Their fate is increasingly exposed to the superficial attention of the international laws and many refugee families are prevented, without any reason, from living a normal life. Refugees arriving by sea to the south of Italy are usually housed in collection centers called "Reception Centers" all along the procedures for granting asylum.

Only God knows how long they will take. Recently, some hotels have been turned into refugee camps. The Hotel Giglio is not an exception. Based along the highway Milan-Turin in Settimo Torinese, in Plot 55, Cebrosa Road, Hotel Giglio is one of the centers that host refugees of different nationalities.

It accommodates 244 Refugees and Asylum Seekers. The "Reception Center" has become a boxing ring and was visited an infinite number of times by police, intervening to restore order. The calvary began when we first arrived, 10 May 2011. The next day they promised heaven on earth: washing machines, internet point, different types of food, distribution of clothes and abundant allowances: Pocket Money. Unfortunately, these promises have proved to be empty. Not even a quarter of these promises have been converted into actions. It began with the issue of pocket money, an allowance of 17.50 Euro per



week. Pieces of paper with the names of the people written above were distributed; an amount of 5 euros was printed on them and they were supposed to be exchanged with coffee, tea, etc..

Thereafter, the Pocket Money took a turn for the worse, offering the Easy Africa airtime in place of that of Wind. The protests rose until people were given Wind airtime, Easy Africa airtime and cigarettes mandatory ... even for non-smokers!

The food is another sad issue. They have refused to improve the quality of meals. The quality

for men was 43, while that for women was 39.

A large proportion of refugees were cut off.

In order to compensate for what is lacking for basic necessities, many girls are starting to think the unthinkable ... After all, when one door closes, many windows open ...

Here there are no products for the laundry. Refugees hand wash their dirty clothes and the ban to do laundry in the Hotel has been bypassed by migrants going to hang their clothes in a nearby thicket, infested by mosquitoes. The situation is very tense and precarious.

We called the direction of Connecting People, which is responsible for us, in order to improve the situation before people start to think the unthinkable. The refugees are under stress because there is no mean to fill their pockets.

Disputes and conflicts are on the agenda. Some even disrespect the authority. There are countless times that the Police had to visit the Hotel Giglio to solve disputes. If no action is taken to break the stalemate, this could become a real battlefield.

E.E. (Camerun)

After the Asylum, nothing: for most of the refugees, the institutions do not provide pathways to inclusion in the hosting society.

After the Asylum, nothing: for most of the refugees, the institutions do not provide pathways to inclusion in the hosting society. Somalia is a country in the Horn of Africa, former Italian colony, coveted especially from southerners. It gained independence in 1960, has been ruled by different regimes including some that have come to power through democratic elections; others were the result of coups. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, Somalia is living in a complete anarchy, a prey to the power struggles and forces fighting against the peace.

After the collapse of the Somali Government, Somali fled in many countries, including neighboring countries like Kenya and Ethiopia, others have gone to the Persian Gulf countries such as Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and others have reached some European countries through a variety of channels. Someone arrived in the foreign countries lawfully others illegally. Among European countries that have been reached illegally there is also Italy, where it is possible to enter through Libya and the Mediterranean Sea.

To get in Italy is not an easy journey: it is

very difficult and life can be in danger. The journey starts from different places, depending on the Somali region of origin, but the most common escape route is the one passing through Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya and Italy. Others prefer to pass through Djibouti, then going to Eritrea, Sudan, Libya and finally Italy.

The only difference between these two routes is their length, not the danger: in both cases, at any minute it is possible to fall prey to thieves and robbers, or to be caught by special border police. This circumstance is by far the worst as the risk is to be arrested for years and even to be killed.

The reason explaining why Somali leave the homeland includes the armed persecution: some were forced to leave after threats or personal attacks. However, the problems do not end when people leave the country, because of the terrible obstacles faced while traveling through Sudan and Libya, or on the ships from Libya to Italy. And then there is an even more vital question: what can these people get when they arrive in Italy after many vicissitudes? What they will get is worth at least a small part of what they



have suffered to achieve it? The answer is easy to find in the words of the Somalis who have been in Italy during recent years: everyone will say they are disappointed by the state of things they encounter on arrival and that this is not the country they hoped to reach after the challenges faced while travelling. They all complain about the homelessness and about the fact there is no help to find work: they are provided with a valid legal document and then ...

Welcome to Italy, but now it's time to do by yourself! One wonders whether it is possible under any circumstances to leave someone who is accepted as refugees in conditions of poverty, homelessness, saying that from now can do alone.

Bashir M. Hersi (Somalia)

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POETRY

Fahima was born in Somalia in 1991, when the war began. When she was 3 years old the family had to flee to Djibouti where they spent 2 years, then they went to Ethiopia for 4 years. In 2002 she was reunited with her parents, who in the meantime had managed to immigrate to Italy.

At the age of 9 years old for the first time she managed to attend school and after 4 years she has won a writing and stories competition organized by the school she was attending. She participated in the Poetry and Fiction competition "Piazza dei Mestieri Mark Andreoni" 2010, fourth

edition, entitled "Always start anew" reserved to students attending vocational training courses. On 14 May 2010 she won the third prize among 400 competitors from all over Italy.



Fahima H. Haji Elmi (Somalia)

TO ALWAYS START ANEW

To continue watching farther
To rebuild and enjoy afterlife
Not to lose the identity
And to emerge in the society
A life that ends
It is a life that is born
So is this the valuable essence?
...I allow me...
... and I promise ...
As to always start anew
It is just as brave!