

## **MODULE 3. CIRCULARITY.**

### **EXTERNALIZATION OF THE BORDER AND DEPORTATION AGREEMENTS**

---

#### **Capsule 2. Externalisations of European borders in Morocco.**

The externalisation of European borders in the Moroccan<sup>1</sup> context translates into a series of repressive practices that attempt to curb the mobility of foreign African migrants in Morocco in their transit towards Europe, based on raids, arbitrary detentions, arrests, forced displacements to the south or expulsions to other sub-Saharan countries. GADEM's report (2018) lists all the racist and anti-Human Rights practices carried out in Morocco between July and September 2018, whose main objective was to carry out repressive operations on a regular basis against the black population in the north of Morocco, mainly in the vicinity of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, in Tangiers, Tetouan, Nador, Oujda and their surroundings. Under these practices more than 6,500 people arrested and forcibly displaced between July and the beginning of September 2018. These are arrests and forced displacements to southern Morocco carried out by the Moroccan authorities against the black population, regardless of

---

<sup>1</sup> According to 2015 data, 41.6 % (34,966) of people residing in Morocco without nationality are Africans, of whom 64.5 % (22,545) are from countries south of the Sahara desert (IRIDIA, 2019: 160).

whether they are in a regular situation in the country, including both men and minors and women, the sick or refugees with international protection. In other words, all black people without distinction, without requesting documentation and without presenting charges or reasons for their arrest or forced displacement.

Migrants are arrested and taken to police stations in the cities. At the central police station the police automatically take fingerprints and photos with a badge with a registration number. Detained persons are asked to indicate their name, country of origin/nationality as well as their age. It is therefore possible for the police to identify those who are unaccompanied foreign minors, who are among those arrested, without this leading to stopping their forced displacement<sup>2</sup>. After this process, they are put on buses, handcuffed by the police individually or in pairs to prevent them from escaping, for their forced displacement to cities in the interior and south of Morocco. The city with the highest number of forced displacements is Tiznit in the Sahara desert (800 kilometres from Tangier), but they are also displaced to other cities such as Béni Mellal, Dahkla, Agadir, Casablanca, Marrakech, Errachidia, Safi, Fez or Kenitra. From Nador, they are also displaced to Oujda, on the border with Algeria, to be subsequently deported to Algeria. These people are not told which city they will be moved to, either at the police station or on the bus. These plastic-coated buses, where they are taken handcuffed, without knowing where to go, without food or the possibility of going to the toilet, leave them on the outskirts of towns, at motorway exits, in toll booths, in the middle of roads, "migrants are dumped at a distance of three to six kilometres from their final destination<sup>3</sup>". Sometimes together, sometimes they are dropped off in small groups. The reason

---

<sup>2</sup> Against law n°02-03, still in force, which protects minors against any form of expulsion from Moroccan territory, be it deportation or expulsion). Articles 26 et 29 de la loi n° 02-03 relative à l'entrée et au séjour des étrangers au Royaume du Maroc, à l'émigration et l'immigration irrégulières - Dahir n° 1-03-196 du 16 ramadan 1424 (11 novembre 2003)).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.libe.ma/La-chasse-a-l-homme-se-poursuit\\_a100783.html](https://www.libe.ma/La-chasse-a-l-homme-se-poursuit_a100783.html)

given by a spokesman for the Tangier authorities for the forced displacements to the south is humanitarian, as the migrants have been "transferred to cities where living conditions are better"<sup>4</sup>.

Once displaced to cities in the south of the country, and in their attempt to return to the cities they come from using public transport, they are told that it is forbidden or impossible to return to the north, that a residence permit is required or that they have to pay much more. Pretexts to prevent non-Moroccan black citizens from moving freely in Moroccan territory, and to force them to stay in the south, far from the border areas. They are also refused to buy a bus ticket, prevented from doing so by the police at the transport stations, or the companies themselves refuse to sell bus tickets to black people to travel to the north of the country.

In addition to forced displacement, Morocco has carried out deportations to other countries. The Moroccan government refers to these deportations as 'return operations', and the data it provides is mixed with the number of people who benefit from the IOM's Voluntary Return Project (IRIDIA, 2020: 161). In 2018, 5608 persons were deported -1509 deportations of which would have been carried out in collaboration with IOM- where 33 % were nationals from Guinea Conakry, 20 % from Ivory Coast, 18 % from Senegal, 11 % from Cameroon, 5 % from Mali, 4 % from Congo-Brazzaville, 3 % from Nigeria, 2 % from the Philippines, 1 % from Burkina Faso and 1 % from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and finally 1 % from Liberia (IRIDIA, 2020: 172). GADEM collects in another 2018 report, "Expulsions Gratuites"<sup>5</sup>, information on these deportations carried out between September and October 2018 in the city of Tangier, where 142 people were detained and 89 of them were deported to

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.h24info.ma/maroc/des-centaines-de-migrants-deplaces-du-nord-par-les-autorites-marocaines/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gadem-asso.org/en/free-expulsions-expulsions-gratuites/>

their country of origin by commercial flights, including ten minors, people in regular status and people in need of international protection. This is how a testimony gathered in our own investigation put it: "They detain you because you don't have papers, they put you on a flight without giving you anything, not even an explanation. They put you on the plane and you land in your country. Imagine the situation, they knock on the door of your house and detain you with whatever you are wearing. After three years of adventure, you arrive in your country with nothing".

Arrests prior to forced displacements or deportations are carried out by Moroccan auxiliary forces in the camps - self-managed settlements of migrants - but also in homes and public spaces. At the time of the arrests, people are not informed of the reason for their detention, as the repressive practices are based on racist practices, because of the colour of their skin, and not on specific or criminalised administrative offences or misdemeanours. Detention operations, as executed, are not covered by any legal framework in Moroccan law, as analysed by GADEM (2018: 8). The arrests take place in houses, usually in neighbourhoods with a large presence of black people, during the night or in the early hours of the morning, surprising them during their sleep and not allowing them to collect their belongings or lock the doors of their houses, through a house raid without any warrant<sup>6</sup>. After the arrests, the houses are ransacked by the same police forces, or by other people afterwards. The arrests also target the settlements of migrants, who, once they no longer have a home, hide and improvise on the outskirts of the city. Or directly on public roads, in places such as markets, food shops or any other type of commerce.

---

<sup>6</sup> Article 10 of the Moroccan Constitution of 2011 states that "no one may be arrested, detained or punished only in the cases and in the manner provided for by law" and that "the home is inviolable or punished only in the cases and in the forms provided for by law" and that "the home is inviolable, searches or checks may only be carried out under the conditions and in the forms provided for by law".

These arrests are therefore racially profiled, racist arrests that cause the black population to be permanently persecuted, arrested and expelled, from their own homes to the desert or to other countries. Detentions, displacements and deportations are the practices brought to Morocco by the externalisation of European borders, for why would Morocco have the intention of protecting European territory if not for the economic benefit and the concession of other negotiations beyond migration?

## TEXT SOURCES

- GADEM: COÛTS ET BLESSURES COÛTS ET BLESSURES  
Rapport sur les opérations des forces de l'ordre menées dans le nord du Maroc entre juillet et septembre 2018 Éléments factuels et analyse. [https://www.lacimade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20180927\\_GADEM\\_Couts\\_et\\_blessures.pdf](https://www.lacimade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20180927_GADEM_Couts_et_blessures.pdf)
- IRIDIA/NOVACT, (2020). Vulneraciones de derechos humanos en las deportaciones. Accesible en: [https://iridia.cat/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Deportaciones\\_FinalMOD\\_Imprimir-2.pdf](https://iridia.cat/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Deportaciones_FinalMOD_Imprimir-2.pdf)