

# BREAK THE SILENCE

## In memory of Laye Alama Condé & Oury Jalloh | Call for Action NRW

Dear friends, dear sisters and brothers,

7 January 2021 marks 16 years since the gruesome death of Oury Jalloh. He was unlawfully detained by the police in Dessau, maltreated, chained hand and foot and burned to death in the tiled cell No. 5 of the police station in Dessau. On the same day, the lies and cover-up attempts by the Dessau police and public prosecutor's office and their connected organs began. All questions from the family, acquaintances, friends of Oury Jalloh were dismissed. The burning questions prompted us to formulate them publicly in an organised way. A nationwide movement emerged. In order to silence it, members of the communities were put under pressure by the authorities and the police, not only in Dessau. The livelihood of the African community in Dessau was permanently threatened. Mouctar Bah's business licence for his tele-café was revoked in order to close the meeting place. Furthermore, constructed lies were used to criminalise the movement. The partners of the Dessau police, their fascist dogs were set on individual members. But all this was not enough to stop the communities' struggle for truth. The Initiative in Memory of Oury Jalloh formed and throughout the republic the cruel and barbaric murder of Oury Jalloh was brought into public focus by the slogan "Oury Jalloh, that was murder!".

Today, after almost 16 years, we are certain that it was murder. Evidence was provided by the Initiative in Memory of Oury Jalloh through independent expert opinions. We also uncovered the murders of Hans-Jürgen Rose and Mario Bichtermann by the Dessau police. If the state had consistently and completely investigated these before the death of Oury Jalloh, Oury Jalloh might still be with us today.

Today, after almost 16 years, racism is more of an issue than ever. Yet those responsible continue to negate the obvious facts. Right-wing and racist structures in the police and the armed forces are uncovered almost weekly. Yet no one asks what they have been doing for years. We know not from studies but from our personal experiences what racism means in isolation camps, in authorities and in police checks. The public media does talk about the racist structures in the Essen police, but why are these not linked to the two victims of racist police brutality, Mikael Haile and Adel's death? Why are the obvious links between these structures and the racist attacks by the police in Essen, three of which have come to public attention this year alone, not drawn?

We have learned in the struggle for justice for Oury Jalloh that we must stand united so that the truth is neither denied nor buried. The struggle for justice is above all a struggle to come together as witnesses to the crimes and to make the crimes visible. Whether then the many commissions of enquiry, court cases, ... recognise the truth is another matter. What is important is that we are aware that change comes first and foremost from us.

So when we come together on the anniversary of Oury Jalloh's death, because we cannot travel to Dessau together this year due to the pandemic, we are not only remembering him, but also keeping his hopes and wishes alive: His wishes for a better life, his care to provide for his family left behind in Guinea, his hopes and his longing to take his child taken away from him in his arms, but also our anger about his multiple murders, in the war for diamonds in Sierra Leone, at sea on the way to Europe, in the isolation camps in Saxony-Anhalt and finally in police cell No. 5, in us.

But when we remember him at the same time, we expose the connection between his murder and the victims we have had to mourn everywhere else. When we shout "Oury Jalloh, that was murder!" we make the logical chain to the other victims of racist police or state brutality in Bremen, Dortmund, Essen, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg, Hanover, Kleve, Remscheid.... visible. When we stand at the places and shout "It was murder!" we defend the truth that cannot be wiped away with hypocritical studies, at least not as long as we can stand together in solidarity and act as witnesses. So the call for this day of remembrance of Oury Jalloh goes out to all initiatives that have formed as a result of racist police or state brutality. On the day of Oury Jalloh's death, let us hold up the truth and send our solidarity to Dessau and all other places. Let us carry the names and the stories of the victims to the public and let the truth shine brightly so that it is not tortured to death in the dungeons of the old reactionary structures like all the fighters of freedom and independence in the dungeons of the colonial powers and their henchmen.

Oury Jalloh is not alone as long as we stand and spread the truth about his murder. And where we stand, others have had to leave because they experienced racism in practice.

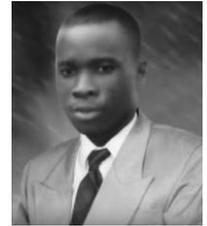
Let us in solidarity break the silence and defend the truth.

Let us build and strengthen communities for a lasting defence of our fundamental rights.

Racism can never be eliminated by the perpetrators, but by us, from below, and only together.

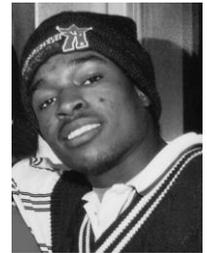
**7<sup>th</sup> January 2005 | Bremen | Laye Alama Condé**

On the same day as Oury Jalloh, on 7 January 2005, Laye Alama Condé died in Bremen as a result of an emetic. The following court cases a farce and insult to the communities.



**14<sup>th</sup> April 2006 | Dortmund | Dominique Kouamadio**

Fled as a minor from the war for raw materials in the Congo, was caught up in the asylum process, shot dead by the Dortmund police on 14 April 2006. Legal processing was rejected several times because his sister was denied the family relationship.



**14<sup>th</sup> January 2007 | Remscheid | Mohammed Sillah / Selah**

Musician and songwriter from Guinea, refugee in Remscheid, died on 14 January 2007. He did not receive the necessary medical care, he was refused a health certificate because he was to be deported. Friends who campaigned for clarification were threatened by police raids and weapons. The city of Remscheid threatened the friends with lawsuits but avoided any public or legal confrontation.



**19<sup>th</sup> May 2011 | Frankfurt am Main | Christy Omordion Schwundek**

In need, she asks for a little stop-gap at the Gallus Job Centre. The police are called. She is shot there right at the job centre. The communities' questions are ignored.



**7<sup>th</sup> July 2012 | Dortmund | Ousman Sey**

Emergency. Despite heart palpitations and seizures, treatment in hospital is refused. As the pain increases and he panics, he breaks a window. Police are called, at the station he dies tied by the hands.



**27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 | Essen | "Mike" Michael Haile**

Departing from Eritrea for a safe life without the military, he died in Essen when the police shot him for as yet unknown reasons. Family and friends are still puzzling over why the quiet and shy young man was shot and still have no plausible answers.



**29<sup>th</sup> September 2018 | Gelder & Kleve | Amed Ahmad**

Escaped Syria's prisons and the bloody war. Found friends in Geldern, but was unlawfully and "intentionally" (?) arrested. Burned to death after two months of unlawful deprivation of liberty in Kleve Prison.



**18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 | Essen Altendorf | Adel**

In an emergency situation he called for help. Shot by the police through the front door of his flat in Altendorf on 18 June without self-defence. To this day, the families and surviving relatives are demanding clarification.