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## A COLLECTIVE TRIBUTE TO MOHAMED KHAMISSE ZACHARIA: THE END OF A DREAM

On November 19, 2020, on the A16 in Calais, a young 20-year-old Sudanese lost his life and all his dreams. He was our compatriot, our brother, our friend.

Mohamed died hit by a car while he was trying to escape the police gas from the back of a truck, vehicle of his desire to reach England as soon as possible. Like his friends from his country, Mohamed left his family trapped in a refugee camp in Darfur, Sudan, and bravely tried his chance towards Europe. Seeking asylum in France when all his compatriots feel rejected there was unimaginable for him. So he set off towards a destination that became a sad destiny.

Mohamed KHAMISSE ZACHARIA is mourned by his parents over there in Sudan and by us, his friends, here at the border with the United Kingdom. We called his parents to tell them of his death. We heard the despair of a mother. The associations were together at our side. Mohamed brings us together. We are all inhabited by the same desire to live that he had.

The 20 years of his life cry out to our hearts, our consciences and to the conscience of humanity. Here is our cry, that of the exiles of Calais: "We don't know what to do, we would like to reach the United Kingdom, we dream of a dignified life, a life of human beings. As you well know, our country knows war, the injustice of governments. You know it, we are here out of necessity, after going through too much suffering on the road. Let the police and the government understand. Why are they chasing us on the highway when scanners, security guards with dogs, detectors are already sifting through all the trucks at the port?"

*O absent so present,  
Thanks to your voice, your greatness of soul,  
The breath of your lips comes to us,  
These lines were born from our hands,  
Filled with the colors of freedom, peace and justice*

Mohamed's Sudanese friends

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This letter arrived as we were finalising the proofs of the journal.

It is written by friends of Mohamed Khamisse Zacharia.  
One more name, among so, so many dead in recent years...  
The community activists in Calais have begun a project of  
counting and naming those who have died at the border.

See: Maël Galisson and the Institute of Race Relations report at  
[https://www.gisti.org/IMG/pdf/2020-11\\_rapport\\_deadly\\_crossings\\_final.pdf](https://www.gisti.org/IMG/pdf/2020-11_rapport_deadly_crossings_final.pdf)