

Friday, January 10, 2014
abhalaga@gmail.com

606

Email:

Mobile: +972 549 459

Arad, Israel

Refugee's activists leader community Arad, Israel

Since 2005, thousands of migrants from Sudan and later Eritrea have made their way to Israel, suffering during arduous journeys through Egypt and Sinai, seeking refuge. The first migrants came fleeing genocide in Darfur, others later fleeing the abhorrent forced military conscription in Eritrea or simply seeking a better life for themselves or their families.

Aside from Israel's decision not to forcibly deport most African asylum-seekers (other than those from South Sudan), the attitudes and measures taken against the migrants by Israelis and especially Israel's leaders have been rather troubling.

The African refugees have been called "a cancer in our body" (MK Miri Regev) and "a threat to the Jewish and democratic character of the State of Israel" (Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu). There have been calls to deport all of them (despite this violating international law) or otherwise to intern them in "detention facilities" in the desert.

There have been violent attacks by individuals and groups against African asylum-seekers, their kindergartens and businesses. Now, in recent months and days, the situation has come to a head.

In fall 2012, a fence was finally built between Israel and Egypt, and at the same time, the Knesset passed an amendment to the "Anti-Infiltration Law" enabling the arrest and detention without trial for up to three years of illegal African "infiltrators." On September 16, 2013, the Israel's Supreme Court unanimously overturned this law, demanding that the state evaluate the asylum claims of migrants incarcerated without trial and/or release them within 90 days.

On Wednesday, December 11, the Knesset passed a new so-called "circumvention" amendment to the Anti-Infiltration Law, allowing the detention of infiltrators for up to one year without trial, in a so-called "open detention facility" in the middle of the desert.

This amendment has been deplored by human rights groups in Israel and abroad, and by over a dozen leading Jewish organizations in the US (including T'ruah, HIAS, et al.) in an open letter to Netanyahu, though it has yet to raise a significant outcry among the Israeli public, the majority of whom seem to be in favor of the law or at best apathetic.

That is, at least, until two weeks ago. One hundred and fifty African migrants marched from their "open" desert detention facility to Jerusalem to demand freedom and that their asylum claims be heard. I saw with my own eyes - and countless Israelis saw on their TV and computer screens - how the peaceful protesters were brutally torn away from their Jewish supporters, arrested and forced on buses to return to their desert prison. Never in my worst nightmares would I have imagined witnessing such a sight in the Jewish state.

Some Sudanese & Eritrean & Israel activists gather and decided to make something, then all together organized demonstration peacefully and holding candles, but nothing change and the government decided to continuing the same policies plus the ministry of interior give

Friday, January 10, 2014
abhalaga@gmail.com

606

Email:

Mobile: +972 549 459

Arad, Israel

Refugee's activists leader community Arad, Israel

orders to renew visas for one month & 2 months to give chances for refugees to choose between register vulnerable return or prepare to the detention center.

Refugees leader decided to make strike from work for 3 days, and Marche to foreigner's Embassies (UNHCR & USA & Canada & Germany & France & Ethiopia & South Africa &) to deliver message to these Embassies to talk with Israeli government.

After 3 days from Strike also nothing change and the government announced that we would not change our decision that made by Knesset and the Supreme Court.

Then refugee's leader decided to continue the strike, in the fourth day all refugees demonstrated front of Knesset building.

Fifth day still people demonstrate in Tel Aviv in Lewinsky park,

Refugees leaders after meeting decided on Saturday Jan 11, 2014 to make another big demonstration from only Women & Children front of prime minister house, and deliver message to start finding better solution to the refugees problem, until Jan 31, 2014 if the government didn't make any change they will send all refugees Application of RSD to Geneva,

On Sunday Jan 12, 2014, the refugee's leader coordinating with NGOs (ARDC & Hotline for foreigner migrants) will distribute the Forms in all Cities.

My best regards,

Mohamed Adam Salih

Sudanese Refugee's Activist in Arad, Israel