

## **Testimonial Nabil**

Basel, 25.04.2020

The conversation was held in Arabic and French and has been translated into German and now into English.

Content Note:

Physical violence, suicide threat, camp life, denial of rights

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*How long have you been in the camp?*

"Five months and one week."

*What have you experienced here?*

"The first month was good. After this it was just awful."

*How are you feeling concerning your mental state?*

"I'm not well. The Securitas choked me. I was in the hospital. Afterwards they said that I was crazy, that I had tried to attempt suicide. Right now, I just get up, go to the forest and wait until evening. I avoid everyone, I don't talk to anyone. I can't do it anymore. I'm tired. Especially now during Ramadan."

*Do you feel discriminated against?*

"What do you mean by discriminated?"

*For example, that you're treated differently than others because of your religion, your language, your origins?*

"In the camp people from the Maghreb are discriminated against."

*How's your physical health?*

"So-so."

*Have you yourself experienced violence by the Securitas? Have you witnessed violence by the Securitas against others?*

"I have experienced seven instances of violence [see above]. I don't want to talk about them again. Now during Ramadan, the situation is weird as well. Dinner is served at 18:30. After this they won't give you anything. But during Ramadan we're only allowed to eat after 20:35. If you go down at this time and ask for something to eat, the Securitas give you Kiri-cheese and a piece of bread. But nothing more. There

are people from the Maghreb who share a date or something else with you. Once before Ramadan a *boss* from the ORS came to us, he said that three people from the Maghreb should volunteer to go grocery shopping with someone from the ORS and to cook for Ramadan. We then went to the ORS again because we wanted to do this. Then suddenly they said that it's off the table. Now nobody can go grocery shopping with them."

*Where in the camp does this violence happen?*

"Right at the entrance there's this room. If we film this room, the Securitas call the police which means two or three days of prison."

*What languages do the Securitas speak when addressing you?*

"German, I don't understand anything."

*How many Securitas are violent? Can you describe them? Do you know their names or serial numbers?*

"I know their faces, but not the names or service numbers. They hide their numbers. They provoke us for no reason. When you for instance call your mother, they think that you want to record something on video and hit you."

I'm able to recognize the face. One is "Turkish". He owns a Porsche.

One of them is "Russian". He is bald, walks like a bodybuilder, about 1.80m tall, blue eyes, owns a Mercedes, black with a German license plate, has a styled full beard. No tattoos, no earrings. Apparently, he's translating into Russian for asylum seekers at the camp. Maybe he's from Kazakhstan or Chechnya, though."

*Are there any witnesses or proof?*

"The boss of the Securitas. He laughed. I said: Have you seen what they've done? He didn't care. Once the boss of the ORS dropped in. He also didn't say anything. They beat the weak, not the strong ones."

*Why are the Securitas able to exercise this violence?*

"Once I was smoking a cigarette. I called a friend to come smoke with me. The Securitas was observing me the whole time. I asked him why he was looking at me like that. Afterwards they beat both of us up."

I have almost been choked to death, another person as well. I wanted to help someone. Three of them took me and beat me up.

There has also been an *Arab* who went crazy. He took a knife and threatened to kill himself. They called the police, they came with drawn rifles [see Interview with Youssuf, 08.05.2020]. Yesterday when there was nothing to eat, a strong "Algerian"

threw around all the chairs. The Securitas didn't do anything because they're scared of him."

*What do the employees who witness this do?*

"They witness everything but are not able to do anything. There was a Tunisian woman\* who worked for the ORS. In the meantime, she quit. She had to cry when she saw what was happening. The Securitas told her to go away. Four months ago, she quit."

*What happens when you call the police?*

"When the police come, the Securitas make coffee for them. They drink coffee together, laugh, and then they take the person who was beaten up with them. Once an "Algerian" who speaks German well called the police. Then other police officers came. The Securitas are always calling the same police officers. When the police arrived, they were against the Securitas. First, they talked to the "Algerian" and told the Securitas that they were only allowed to talk later. They asked the "Algerian" whether he wanted to report the Securitas. He said no, because the Securitas have a family as well. But the police nevertheless reported the Securitas. I don't know the name of the Securitas, though. The other group of police officers collaborate with the Securitas.

When the Securitas call the police, it's always the same two officers. They have a good time together. They're regular police officers, they come in a regular police car."

*Do you know anything about similar cases in other camps?*

"I know someone in Olten. Yesterday I smoked until 23 o'clock. We were all downstairs, then, at 23:00, everyone left. One Securitas came and told me to put all chairs away. I did this and then went to sleep.

In Neuchatel one "Algerian" was choked to death by the Securitas. A 24-year-old "Algerian." This happened two or three years ago."

*What do you think about the Swiss asylum procedure?*

"Prison is better. I was in prison, it was like a stay at a hotel. This here is a disaster. I never would have thought that something like this happened in Switzerland.