

Fighting for Freedom: Seven Hours for Seven Years

Call for solidarity with the El Hiblu 3
Saturday, 28 March 2026 in Valletta, Malta
09:00 to 16:00 CET, Location: La Vallette Square

Join us for a seven-hour vigil with a press conference, speeches, street-theatre, music, info-table, banners and more to protest against seven years of ongoing criminalization against three human rights defenders.

On 28th March 2019, Abdalla, Amara and Kader arrived in Malta, having been rescued from a sinking rubber boat in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. At just 15, 16 and 19 years old, their dream of arriving in Europe had come to pass, yet a new nightmare was just beginning.

On 28th March 2026, it will be 2,555 days since the El Hiblu 3 arrived in Malta and since they have been criminalised, unjustly accused of having committed multiple crimes, including acts of terrorism, threatening a crew, and hijacking a ship. These charges could carry life sentences.

With this protest, we will continue to show our solidarity with the three young men, whom we awarded a human rights defenders prize for the bravery they showed as mediators and translators when facing the threat of an illegal pushback to Libya.

During our seven-hour vigil, we will condemn the ongoing injustice against the El Hiblu 3 and mark every hour, and thus every year, with different activities focused on:

- Criminalization of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe;
- Illegal push backs, particularly in the Central Mediterranean;
- EU externalization policies with a particular view on the deals with Libya and Tunisia;
- Increasing deportations from Malta and other EU countries;
- Campaigns against racism and social exclusion in Malta;
- The civil fleet and its work against a politics of abandonment and pushbacks;
- Transnational networking and resistance against the EU border regime.

Provisional program

09:00	Arrival
10:00	Press conference: Ċetta Mainwaring (Coalition for the El Hiblu 3); Vicki-Ann Cremona (Repubblika); Regine Nguini (African Media Association Malta); Katrine Camilleri (Jesuit Refugee Service Malta); David Yambio (Refugees in Libya)
11:00	Solidarity Messages by Kopin
12:00	Non-Assistance and Pushbacks at Sea (Daniel Mainwaring, Ċetta Mainwaring, Kirstin Sonne, Malta Migration Archive)
13:00	Moviment Graffiti Drum Circle

- 14:00** Stop the Pushbacks to Torture Camps in Libya! Hagen Kopp (AlarmPhone) and David Yambio (Refugees in Libya)
- 15:00** Ballad of the El Hiblu 3, Gabriel Schembri and Francesco Frendo
- 15:30** Close