

JUNE 2026

## Exposing corruption is a dangerous business

Investigative journalist Omar Radi has uncovered numerous scandals relating to social and economic inequalities in Morocco. For his work he was put under surveillance, intimidated, and arrested.

Since 2008, Omar Radi has been documenting how impoverished rural communities are being pressured into selling their sand deposits at rock-bottom prices. As a key ingredient in cement, sand has become a scarce commodity for the global construction industry. It is also critical for disappearing beaches: it is used in sand replenishment as a coastal protection measure.

The uncomfortable journalist was deemed a nuisance and was sentenced to six years of solitary confinement in a sham trial. Following a royal pardon by the Moroccan king, Omar Radi and his colleagues were released from prison at the end of 2024. His story stands as a symbol for the many people who are persecuted for their commitment to freedom and transparency.



Omar Radi and Martina Bäurle

Our story begins where people arrive in safety. That is our mission.



September 4 - 6 2026  
at Bürgerhaus Wilhelmsburg

## Hastam-Festival – Just because I AM

For the second time, Atena Eshtiaghi is organizing the intercultural Hastam Festival („Just because I AM“) featuring artists from Iran and Afghanistan living in the diaspora.

As a cellist and composer, our former scholarship recipient Atena Eshtiaghi has found a new artistic home in Hamburg. She has firmly established herself in the music scene and bridges genre boundaries in a unique way. She moves effortlessly between European and Persian classical music, jazz, and electronic music. For her composition for the documentary film „My Stolen Planet“ she received the prestigious German Documentary Film Music Award.

## My Hamburg

„Hamburg has won my heart. For the first time in years, I was able to breathe again here. The peace and quiet, the walks along the waterfront, and the openness of the people have given me renewed strength. In this beautiful city I wrote the first chapters of my new novel — the scenes are set in the streets of Hamburg.

The Foundation nominated me for the Weimar Human Rights Prize and I have benefited enormously from it. My career has made a huge leap forward. The award was a powerful message that I am seen and recognized for my work as a feminist activist.

I am now returning to Zimbabwe with renewed strength, carrying a piece of Hamburg within me. With sincere gratitude,“ Karen Farisai Mukwasi



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# A Break from the Fight

„I need retreats in nature where I can enjoy the outdoors. In Hamburg’s green parks, along its sweeping riverbanks, untouched forests, or sandy dunes, I can completely switch off.“

Turkish-Kurdish human rights lawyer Davut Arslan represents prisoners, refugees, and victims of state violence. After years of constant strain, he is using his time in Hamburg to gather new strength for his important work.



Three questions for our guest:

## What weighs on your work the most?

The constant surveillance and the daily work with traumatized people takes a heavy toll. On top of that come the many forms of harassment and legal restrictions.

## What does Hamburg mean to you?

For me it means time to think, to breathe, and distance from personal threats.

## What will you take with you from your Hamburg time?

New energy and a sense of international solidarity.

As an accomplished attorney, Davut Arslan represents the long-established Turkish human rights association İHD (Human Rights Association) as well as the human rights foundation HRFT (Human Rights Foundation of Turkey).

For more than six years he has attended the peaceful protests of the Saturday Mothers (Cumartesi Anneleri) in Istanbul almost every week. This initiative calls for the truth about the fate of relatives who disappeared while in state custody.

Later this year, Hamburg students are organizing an event with him to gain direct insight into his work and the current human rights situation in Turkey. Members of Amnesty International are also taking advantage of his visit for a personal exchange of experience with the expert.

# What are our guest up to?

Julia Cimafiejeva (Belarus)



receives the Hilde Domin Prize for Literature in Exile 2026.

Stanislav Aseyev (Ukraine)

is on a reading tour with his book on imprisonment and torture. "Bright Path, Donezk, Report from a Torture Prison" (Edition Suhrkamp).

Aleksej Bobrovnikow (Ukraine)



reads from his second volume "Gray Zones" in Kyiv.

Karen Farisai Mukwasi (Zimbabwe)



was awarded the Human Rights Prize of the City of Weimar for her work to strengthen women's rights.

## Donors

The board of the Hamburg Foundation for Politically Persecuted People extends its heartfelt thanks to all donors.



## Donation Account

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