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## PRESS RELEASE — URGENT

### **“Until Freedom or Death”: Fateh Nekali Begins Second Hunger Strike at Bulgaria’s Busmantsi Detention Center**

After nearly three weeks since ending his first hunger strike, Fateh Nekali, detained at the Busmantsi immigration detention center, has today informed the facility’s doctor of his decision to resume his hunger strike — this time refusing both food and water — in what he calls his “final protest.”

Despite no charges, no trial, and no crime, Fateh has endured months of arbitrary detention in Busmantsi, where asylum seekers and people facing deportation can be held for months or even years, in degrading and inhumane conditions.

His decision comes after repeated promises of release that proved to be empty. *“They told me to see a psychiatrist,”* Fateh says, *“but I am not sick. I am simply asking for my rights to be respected.”*

Born in Algeria, Fateh was detained in Bulgaria a decade ago, spending 18 months in Busmantsi before being released, having already served the maximum time allowed in administrative detention. After that, he built a life in the country, working and starting a family. However, after briefly returning to Algeria to complete paperwork for his marriage, his visa request was denied, forcing him to risk everything to reunite with his wife. In 2021, he managed to return to Bulgaria, living and working there until early 2025, when he was summoned to a police station and detained once again — without trial or legal defense — condemned to repeat the same injustice.

*“We are deeply concerned for Fateh’s health,”* says Mirka Del Pasqua, from No Name Kitchen, an NGO advocating for detainees’ rights. *“His body is already weakened by the previous hunger strike, and the physical and psychological toll of detention is immense. Every hour counts.”*

Now, his hunger strike is a life-or-death stand for his own freedom, but for all those silenced behind the walls of Europe’s detention centers. Fateh’s message is clear: *“Until freedom or death.”*

We call on the Bulgarian authorities to act immediately — to release Fateh Nekali, to end arbitrary detention, and to ensure that no person’s life is reduced to a bureaucratic waiting room.

Speak out. Because silence, this time, could mean death.

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