

December 2022

## **EQUINOX INITIATIVE FOR RACIAL JUSTICE: STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF MAMADOU BA**

*The Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice stands in support of activist and Steering Group member Mamadou Ba, who faces unjust legal proceedings in Portugal for alleged defamation against neo-Nazi Mário Machado.*

Mamadou Ba is a prominent anti-racist organiser who has lived and worked in Portugal for 25 years, at the forefront of movements for racial and social justice. Mamadou is part of a generation of Black activists working toward recognition and reparation for the country's history and injustices.

### **About the case**

On October 27th 2022, Portuguese Judge Carlos Alexandre published a decision to pursue a defamation and injury complaint against Mamadou Ba, filed by the neo-Nazi Mário Machado.[1] Mamadou Ba will be taken to court to respond to the alleged defamation and injury of the neo-Nazi and white supremacist Mário Machado. In 2020, Machado accused Mamadou Ba of calling him a “murderer” in response to the killing of Alcindo Monteiro, a young black Portuguese citizen, murdered in 1995 by a group of neo-Nazi skinheads.


If the case against him succeeds, Mamadou Ba may face imprisonment or a fine. Considering previous statements made by the public prosecutor, there is a real danger that the charges against Mamadou succeed, presenting a moral and political victory of fascism over the anti-racist struggle, and the confirmation of the institutional racism of the Portuguese justice system.

### **Equinox Stands in Solidarity with Mamadou Ba**

We the undersigned, deplore the proceedings against Mamadou as an unjust and targeted campaign in an attack on a leading anti-racist figure in Portugal. Across Europe, we see

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[1] Mário Machado is a Portuguese neo-Nazi, founder and former leader of the Frente Nacional, a former member of the Hammerskins Portugal group and founder and former leader of the nationalist movement Nova Ordem Social, suspended in 2019.



the encroachment of far-right actors into mainstream politics increasingly legitimised and safeguarded by public institutions.

This is not the first time Mamadou Ba has faced targeted attacks from the far-right using the penal code in Portugal. Mamadou has been the target of hate and defamation campaigns by the far-right, including death threats.

We must see this case as part of a growing trend in which anti-racist activists are persecuted and silenced by public institutions when contesting the far-right and advocating for justice for racialised people. This case cannot become a precedent preventing anti-racist activists from publicly condemning people for their racist acts. Should the case succeed, it will serve as a symbol of institutional racism in the Portuguese justice system.

We at Equinox stand in solidarity with Mamadou and will fight against the legal intimidation and normalisation of activists by the far-right. We urge the Portuguese Court to refuse complicity in neo-Nazi campaigns to persecute Mamadou Ba. We call for the charges against Mamadou Ba to be dropped immediately.

Signed,

Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice team and Steering Group:

Sarah Chander, Claire Gilder, Alfiaz Vaiya, Maria Atanasova, Esther Mamadou, Dinah Bons, Stephanie Richani, Serina Taylor, Bulelani Mfaco, Myriam Douo, Adla Shashati and Maryan Abdulkarim.

*More information and testimonies in support of Mamadou can be found [here](#).*