**RAPAR**

**A Manchester-UK based Human Rights Organisation**

**3rd March 2016**

**Press release – for immediate release – with video link, 2 picture links**

**Afghan Interpreters Burned Out – But Staying Put**

**RAPAR’s two young Afghan interpreters, who worked for the British army for four years and who are trapped in Calais -** [**http://www.channel4.com/news/catch-up/display/playlistref/270216**](http://www.channel4.com/news/catch-up/display/playlistref/270216) **- have spent the last two nights in makeshift tents on the north side of the camp, sharing with other homeless Afghan men.**

**Abdullah (not his real name) told RAPAR:**

**“I went to see my friend.  When I came back our caravan was burned.  I don’t know who did it.”**

**His travelling companion and fellow interpreter, Said (not his real name) added:**

**“The same as everyone, we got burned and nowhere to go.  A lot of people are homeless, and we are the same. ”**

**On Tuesday night (1st), and completely independently of these young men, Megan Howell, an English photographer currently based in Calais, reported to RAPAR that a huge fire had burned for 20 minutes -** [**http://www.rapar.org.uk/uploads/4/6/8/7/4687542/9087190\_orig.jpg**](http://www.rapar.org.uk/uploads/4/6/8/7/4687542/9087190_orig.jpg) -**but the CRS\* water cannon, visible and immobile,  remained on the motorway bridge until the fire had been put out -** [**http://www.rapar.org.uk/uploads/4/6/8/7/4687542/397937\_orig.jpg**](http://www.rapar.org.uk/uploads/4/6/8/7/4687542/397937_orig.jpg)**. Afrika, a resident of the camp who has been in touch with RAPAR for the last three months confirmed this on Wednesday (2nd) morning, on the phone:**

**“The water cannon drove up to the fire, after it was out.”**

**When RAPAR approached a UK national media outlet on the ground in Calais, to establish whether they had captured any footage of that fire, it was told that there had not been any mainstream media presence on the camp the previous night because of ‘security’ issues.**

**RAPAR’s two young men, Abdullah and Said, have instructed French lawyer, Orsane Broisin, to act on their behalf.  Following meetings on Sunday with both men, Ms Broisin told RAPAR:**

**“These young men must apply for international protection in France first, which will be done by the end of this week.”**

**Speaking to RAPAR this morning (3rd March), from the north side of the camp, Abdullah explained:**

**“They are destroying the camp, and burning the rooms at night.  Some people say it is French people burning the rooms, and some people say it is refugees.  I don’t know.  But, from everything that has happened to them, some refugees are going crazy now.  They [the French State] just want us to leave this area but there is no place outside the Jungle for us to go.”**

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\* CRS  - Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité - the only official force of law and order to be seen in the Calais "Jungle" camp.