

Die Gewerkschaft Ver.di Berlin organisierte mit einem breiten Bündnis die Demonstration „**Berlin ist unkürzbar – Umverteilung jetzt!**“ gegen Kürzungen im Kultur- und Sozialbereich. Dabei wurden Palästina-solidarische Demonstrant\*innen von den Ordnern schikaniert, eingekesselt und der Polizei übergeben. Louna Sbou – Direktorin des Kulturzentrum „Oyoun“ und geplante Rednerin – wurde untersagt ihre Rede zu halten. Die Demonstration endete mit mehreren Festnahmen Palästina-solidarischer Demonstranten.

At the **Berlin ist unkürzbar – Umverteilung jetzt!** (Berlin is Uncuttable – Redistribution now!) protest against cultural and social budget cuts, Palestine solidarity was sidelined and repressed. Demonstrators were harassed, kettled, and handed over to police, while Louna Sbou—director of Cultural Centre Oyoun and scheduled speaker—was first prohibited from using any Arabic words, then canceled completely. The demonstration ended with several arrests.

## Palestine Solidarity Cut from “Uncuttable” Demonstration

The Palestine Exception in German Solidarity Strikes Again. Statement by Arts & Culture Alliance Berlin and Internationalist Antiracists Against Cuts

[The Left Berlin](#)

25/02/2025



Photo: internationalist antiracists against cuts

We condemn the racist behaviour against culture and social workers in solidarity with Palestine by the organizers and police at the Unkürzbar protest on February 22nd in Berlin.

The protest “Berlin ist unkürzbar – Umverteilung jetzt!” (Berlin is Uncuttable – Redistribution now!) was organized by the union ver.di Berlin against the Berlin Senate’s massive budget cuts in social work, culture, universities, mobility and environmental protection.

At the protest, many demonstrators drew a clear connection between the right-wing agenda of budget cuts, censorship around the genocide in Palestine, and police violence in Berlin. Neoliberal austerity politics go hand in hand with increased law enforcement spending, the securitization of civil society, and the disenfranchisement of the cultural sector—all methods of social control. It is no coincidence that Berlin claims to have no money for homeless shelters or queer art projects while simultaneously pouring tens of millions of Euros more into the police budget, which it then uses to harass those very demographics.

Solidarity with Palestine, mostly from racialized people, was present from the beginning of the demonstration with signs such as “Anti-racists against budget cuts” and “Defund police, fund people.” They were both systematically and individually targeted by the march organizers and police.

Louna Sbou, director of Oyouun, the first initiative to be defunded under CDU rule in Berlin—based on false antisemitism allegations—was scheduled to hold a speech. At the protest, she was asked about the contents of her speech. The organizers forbade her from using any Arabic words, thus perpetuating and normalizing racist police language bans, then banned her from using the German word “Widerstand”, meaning resistance, and finally abruptly banned her from speaking altogether, claiming they “couldn’t trust that she wouldn’t use the word ‘Widerstand’.” Ironically, Sbou’s contribution is something that the organisers considered ‘cuttable’, raising wider questions for the movement against these cuts: is it only White art and White culture, spoken in German or English, which we cannot bear to lose? Are those forms of cultural expression which challenge the norms and assumptions of dominant mechanisms of power unwelcome in this movement? Do we imagine culture to be something inherently political, or do we only resort to politics as a means to preserve apolitical culture?

From the beginning of the demonstration and even in negotiations beforehand, Palestinian solidarity activists tried to compromise with the ver.di leadership’s conditions for inclusion. These good-faith attempts were however met with persistent badgering by stewards imposing ever new, increasingly nonsensical and unjust demands. About midway through the march route, a large group of Palestine solidarity protesters, “Internationalist Antiracists Against Cuts,” was targeted by ver.di stewards, organizers, and police alike. A representative of Bündnis Unkürzbar claimed the Palestine “bloc” was “lacking in solidarity,” being “divisive,” and “infiltrating the protest.” Protest stewards, under the direction of ver.di leadership, physically kettled the pro-Palestine group, stopping them from continuing. This kettle was then directly handed over to police, who completely surrounded and isolated the Palestine solidarity protesters. Demonstrators were also called “terrorists” by individual demo participants, shown the middle finger by one steward and subjected to slurs by another, while the group in its entirety was repeatedly called a “black bloc” by an apparently colorblind organizer. The organizers claimed that all participants connecting budget cuts to any issue associated with Palestine (censorship, genocide, police violence) were violating the “consensus of the protest”—a document that was forced through by a small group of demo organisers, despite co-organisers repeatedly voicing concerns about targeted marginalisation against Palestinian protesters and their allies. This “consensus” document devotes almost of third of its entire length to policing expressions around Palestine/Israel.

Additional targeted infringements on speech, such as banning the word ‘Widerstand’, as it could be used interchangeably with ‘Intifada’, were made unilaterally during the protest by organizers. We strongly oppose both the suppression of Arabic and of the language of political resistance from this protest against attacks on culture. The repression of a language, the very medium through which much of living culture expresses itself, is a core feature of genocide. We therefore utterly reject the insinuation that speaking directly about genocide is irrelevant to a protest against attacks on culture from the state, especially when the very purpose of these repressive measures in Germany is to support the continuation of genocide in Palestine.

At the end, a group of around 100 pro-Palestine demonstrators was completely cordoned off by police and forbidden to join the final rally, with police claiming there was “no space” for them, despite this being an obvious lie. The police made up new restrictions specifically for these protesters, violently tried to confiscate a banner, and punched several people without warning directly in the face.

Two PoC were arrested while walking away at the end of the demonstration. One is an filmmaker visiting from Australia who received a prize at the Berlinale the night before, whom police falsely accused of a robbery that took place in December. The second person was arrested for allegedly chanting a chant that wasn’t even officially banned. He describes a traumatizing ordeal in the hands of the police: being denied medical care for hours, not being told where he was being taken, being told he would spend 48 hours in jail, and being locked in a bathroom at the detention center. He was furthermore refused information in English despite not speaking German, denied food for hours and the right to call a lawyer despite repeated requests, and treated disrespectfully and aggressively by medical staff in the detention center. Family members were wrongly told by the police that he had been brought to a hospital.

It seems many groups joining the protest recognized only THAT their funding is being cut, not WHY their funding is being cut. Drawing the explicit connections between the funding cuts and the draconian levels of censorship and repression amid increased police and weapons funding in Germany is not divisive, it is accurate. ver.di and Unkürzbar organizers enacted repressive politics against racialized people within their midst throughout the organizing process and finally handed the genocide-critical group over to the police, all while claiming themselves to be the victim. It was not those artists, cultural and social workers kettled by the police who were lacking solidarity, it was ver.di, Unkürzbar and all who stood by and watched as it happened!

We stand in solidarity with our colleagues and comrades who were mistreated and disrespected by ver.di, Bündnis Unkürzbar and the Berlin police. We thank those individuals, organisations, and rank-and-file members of ver.di who have stood in solidarity with us not just on Saturday but also beforehand. We call upon the main organisers of Unkürzbar and ver.di leadership to reflect on their stance and behaviour towards Palestinian solidarity groups within their ranks, to take accountability for these failings, and to engage in more constructive dialogue and practices moving forward. We remain resolute that we will not be silenced, cut, or excluded from this fight against the state’s attack on culture and social services in Berlin and beyond.

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[https://www.instagram.com/p/DGnqLVfsouC/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/DGnqLVfsouC/?img_index=1)

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jüdische stimme:

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## „Unkürzbar“-Demo: Gewerkschaftsführung hetzt Polizei auf Palästinasolidarischen Block

- [Liam R Otto](#)
- [Frida Kahl](#)
- [Guiseppe Zanoni](#)

22.02.2025, Lesezeit 4 Min.



Foto: Guiseppe Zanoni

Auf der gewerkschaftlich organisierten Unkürzbar-Demo heute in Berlin griff die Demoleitung den Sozialen Block für ihre Palästinasolidarität an. Diesen Spaltungsversuch dürfen wir nicht hinnehmen.

Für die Bildung tun sie nichts: Im kommenden Jahr sollen 778 Millionen Euro in Berlin eingespart werden. Unter anderem bei zahlreichen queeren Projekten, der sozialen Arbeit und im Bildungsbereich werden massiv Gelder fehlen.

Deswegen waren wir heute am 22.02.25 auf der „Unkürzbar Demo“, die vom Roten Rathaus zum Brandenburger Tor lief. Etwa 5000 Demonstrant:innen schlossen sich dem Aufruf der DGB-Gewerkschaften an und brachten ihre Wut über die Kürzungen auf die Straße.

Die Demo fand im aktuellen Kontext der laufenden TVöD und BVG-Streiks statt. Die Forderungen nach höheren Löhnen wurden so mit der politischen Kritik an den Kürzungen verbunden. Doch diese Verbindung wäre wirksamer gewesen, wenn die Demo im Rahmen eines Streiktages stattgefunden und Beschäftigte gemeinsam demonstriert hätten.

Bereits zu Beginn der Demo wurden politische Forderungen, die sich nicht auf Kürzungen beziehen, kategorisch ausgeschlossen. Dass es dabei primär um die Unterdrückung von palästinasolidarischen Stimmen ging, zeigte sich kurz darauf, als die Gewerkschaftsführung den „sozialen Block“ an das Ende verlegte.

Nachdem der Block offen Palästina solidarisch aufgetreten ist, wurde er aufgefordert, sich leise zu verhalten und stehen zu bleiben, sodass der Rest der Demo an ihnen vorbeiziehen konnte. Als der Block sich weigerte, am Ende der Demo zu laufen, wurde er von Ordner:innen blockiert. Wieder wurde er aufgefordert, sich ruhig zu verhalten, damit „die Polizei nicht einschreiten müsse“.

Abgesehen davon, dass die Gewerkschaften sich immer gegen Eingriffe der Polizei stellen müssten, war heute die Entscheidung der Demoleitung verantwortlich für die Eingriffe der Polizei. Eine solche Aufforderung spaltet zu jeder Zeit die Demonstrierenden und bricht die Kampfkraft.

Einen solchen Verrat können wir nicht hinnehmen.

Durch Ordner:innen und Polizei ans Ende verfrachtet, war es für die Polizei ein leichtes Spiel, unbeachtet Einschüchterungsmaßnahmen durchzuführen, den Block von der Abschlusskundgebung auszuschließen und Demonstrierende festzunehmen.

Wir stellen uns klar gegen die Trennung des Kampfes gegen Kürzungen und Palästinasolidarität sowie jegliche Repressionen.

Die Kürzungen im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales sind Folgen der bundesweiten Aufrüstung. Das Geld, was im Sozialen, in der Gesundheit, Bildung und Co. fehlt, steckt in den Waffen, die ins Ausland geliefert werden, in der Aufrüstung von Bundeswehr und Polizei, in dem Genozid in Gaza. Das Geld, was uns fehlt, tötet Menschen in Gaza und dutzenden anderen Kriegen. Ein wirksamer Kampf gegen Kürzungen und Rechtsruck hat nur Erfolg, wenn er seinen Ursachen nachgeht. Wir dürfen keine weiteren Waffenlieferungen und keinen weiteren Krieg zulassen. Die Entscheidung, Sondervermögen für das Militär statt sozialer Investition, zeigt die Prioritäten der Regierung: Bei der Rüstung sind sie fix.

Wir können nicht auf die Änderungen aus dem Bundestag hoffen. Lösungen für die Krise können wir nur gemeinsam auf der Straße erkämpfen. Dafür müssen wir in Betrieben und Gewerkschaften, in Versammlungen über Kürzungen, Rassismus und Militarisierung diskutieren und selbst dagegen einen Kampfplan aufstellen. Streiks, wie Donnerstag und Freitag, wo BVG und TvÖD zusammen gestreikt haben, müssen wir ausweiten auf alle Bereiche. Die Streiks sollten auch direkt politische Forderungen aufgreifen, wie die Streichung von Mitteln für die Bundeswehr, Waffenlieferungen und Polizei, um diese in Bildung und Soziales zu investieren. Einzelne Streiktage reichen nicht, unsere Streiks müssen so lange alles lahm legen, bis unsere Forderungen erzwungen sind. Nur so können wir Kürzungen, Rechtsruck und Militarisierung erfolgreich bekämpfen.