



RÉSEAU
MEnS



AGENCE UNIVERSITAIRE
DE LA FRANCOPHONIE



PORTRAIT DE SALAH

Originally from Darfur, where I had started studying chemistry, I had to take refuge in South Sudan, then in Chad (Kariyari camp) because of inter-ethnic violence. In 2013, I made the crossing to Lampedusa, then left Italy for France. After many months, I was able to obtain the status of asylum seeker, then finally of refugee in 2020: seven years of difficulties, anxiety, but also of fulfilling cultural and human enrichment.

A door opens at the university

In Italy, I had met teachers from the University of Sorbonne Nouvelle who were helping in refugee camps. When I was finally able to think of my future, I wrote to them in Paris and they told me about a "bridge" year at the university that could allow me to resume my studies, with a good level of French. The registration was free and I could stay in a university room.

We just finished classes, and I passed the exam well. But above all I appreciated the very friendly support of the teachers, who helped us enormously; not only with the language.

My projects: helping, as much as I have been helped

I'm going to take a year's break to work and save money, while still improving my French. Then I'll go back to university, but chemistry is too far away now. I want to study social sciences and wish to help people in



*SALAH IN THE HONOR
COURTYARD OF LA SORBONNE,
WITH STATUES OF VICTOR HUGO
AND LOUIS PASTEUR*

need, through social services. I speak now five languages (Beria, my local mother tongue; Arabic, English, Italian and French) and it could be useful for mediation with foreign families, especially refugees. I intend to apply for the diploma "Hospitality, Mediations, Migrations", at Inalco, a university in Paris.

Thinking back at this whole period, I say to myself that I could have used seven years of my life much better, if I could have gone directly from the Kariyari camp to the French university. But I am still young, and enriched from all the human encounters I made during those difficult years.