A Call to Affirm the Human Rights of All Migrants
On International Migrants Day
December 18, 2015

This December 18, International Migrants Day, will mark the 25th anniversary of the United Nations’ International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. 25 years ago the UN General Assembly approved the Convention, commonly known as the Migrant Workers’ Convention, in a significant recognition of the global dynamic of migration and the need to specifically address the human rights of migrants, without exception.

This year, we call on the U.S. government, elected officials at all levels, members of civil society and all sectors, to reaffirm our commitment to these human rights. While there is growing awareness of the precarious situation of migrants and refugees around the world, hostile and xenophobic voices continue to spew hate, foment distrust, and call for discriminatory and exclusionary policies and actions to divide populations and demonize migrants and their families.

Tragically, in the U.S., punitive immigrant detentions and deportations and abusive border policies and enforcement practices already shamefully dominate current immigration policy.

Now, as the country prepares for the 2016 general election, already garnering worldwide attention, outrageous proposals have surfaced from presidential aspirants to undermine immigrant and refugee rights, massively deport millions of undocumented immigrants and their children, deny constitutionally protected birthright citizenship, exclude the immigration of specific groups, and more. Congress is moving to restrict travelers from certain countries—generally moving backward not forward on the global issue of migration.

Migrants and refugees who have sought to relocate in Europe face an uncertain future—welcomed by many communities and countries willing to extend a helping hand at the same time that other states and the European Union as a whole seek to limit more migration and are actively deporting many migrants and asylum seekers. Anti-immigrant organizations and politicians in Europe, as in the U.S., have further inflamed fears and animosity, rallying populations to oppose government policies to humanely address the influx of migrants and refugees.
Institutions like the United Nations have voiced concerns about rising xenophobia and restrictionist measures in the face of a worldwide “migration crisis”, signaling the need for a more comprehensive global analysis and strategy at the same time that humanitarian aid is immediately needed. In reality, many of the projected actions, including the need to address the “root causes” of accelerating migration, require long term commitments and plans to resolve civil conflicts, build democratic structures and sustainable economies, address poverty and provide access to such social protections as jobs, health care, education and housing.

In this light, initiatives such as the UN’s “Recommended Principles and Guidelines for Human Rights at International Borders,” authored by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), place a much-needed spotlight on the often fragile situation at borders, typically treated by many countries as “zones of exclusion” when it comes to upholding human rights protections. Safe passage across borders is critical for those whose very lives are at stake.

On December 18, International Migrants Day, we call on the U.S. government to affirm its commitment to the human rights of ALL migrants:

- Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- Commit U.S. policies to adherence to the Recommended Principles and Guidelines for Human Rights at International Borders
- End the inhumane detention and deportation of undocumented migrants and provide access for the regularization of their immigration status
- Enhance avenues for refugee and asylum-seekers for protection and safety in accordance with our commitment to international refugee guidelines
- Stand up against the fear and hate-mongering, racist and xenophobic posturing that undermine our much-needed civil discourse on migrants and migration, and which threaten democratic and human rights principles and hard-fought civil laws

Signatures:

**Organizations**
African Communities Together
African Services Committee
AFSCME Local 3299
Alianza Americas
Alianza Mexicana
Alliance for a Just Society
Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action
Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network
Center for Healing Racism
Centro Latino Americano
Cincinnati Interfaith Worker Center
Circles of Nonviolence/Community Collaboratives Initiative
Coalicion de Derechos Humanos
Colibri Center for Human Rights
Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC)
Denver Justice and Peace Committee
Farmworker Association of Florida
Fe y Justicia Worker Center
Filipino Advocates for Justice
Global Action Project
Idaho Community Action Network
Integration Network for Immigrants in Lane County
Kids On The Border Committee
Living Hope Wheelchair Association
Middle East Children’s Alliance
Migrant Rights Collective
National Lawyers Guild, Louisville Chapter
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Our Family Coalition
Presentation Convent
Presentation Justice Network Ireland
Presentation Sisters
Presentation Sisters of Western Australia
Presentation Sisters Queensland
Priority Africa Network
RESPECT Network Europe
Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
South Texas Human Rights Center
Southeast Immigrant Rights Network
Texas Civil Rights Project-Houston
The Lantern
Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC)
UNIRRR
US WILPF - Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom – Immigration
Individuals
Bernardo Alayza Mujica
Martha Alderson
Michael Allen
Sharon Altendorf
Fran Ansley
Yanira Arias
Jane Armbruster
Joan Arnold
Khader Atallah
Jean Bails
Shannon Bali
B. A. Barbato
Diana Barrera
Catherine Barrett
Daniel Benavides
Nancy Bennett
Elise Berendt
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Hannah Gibson
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Jackie Gurany
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Suzanne Hesh
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David Hill
Faye Hinze
Angela Hoang
Irwin Hoenig
Jen Hofer
Teresa Horrigan
Celeste Howard
Elena Hoye
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Brian Huseby
Vanda Janowski
Janice Ihli
Janet Ingram Smith
Susan Inman
Mary Ivers
Carolyn Jaramillo
Yvonne Jennings
Rachel Jensen
Susanne Jonas
Rose Ann Kaiser
Nadia Kanhai
Pete Klosterman
Karl Koessell
Steven Kostis
David Kreindler
Emily Kunkel
Jennifer Ladzinski
Rev. Chuck Lane, Deacon
Zoe Lauenstein
Mary Hope Lee
Suzanne Llewellyn
Mary Ann Lovett
Denise Lytle

Yara Maaz
Alberta Maged
Bro. John Mahoney
Sunaina Maira
Marion Malcolm
Bertha Marin
Clotilde Martin
Sharon Martinas
Helen Martinez
Flora Mary
Marcia L. Matthews
Margaret McKillion
Agnes McCarthy
Maureen F McDermott
Louise McDonald
Shannon McGrath
Haley Mcmaken
Manuel Medrano
Lucia Melgar
Amanda Melrood
Javier Mendez
Petronilla Metzger
Raul Molina
Peta Anne Molloy
Susan Montgomery
Tirso Moreno
Sue and John Morris
Harriet Mullaney
Carlos Munoz
Angela Murphy
Victor Nascimento
Ken Neubeck
Guillermo Nicacio
Marilyn Nickol
Barbara L. Nielsen
Ilene O’Malley
Catherine O’Neill
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