



## **national network for immigrant and refugee rights**

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**\*\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\*\***

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### **On International Migrants Day, Immigrant Rights Organization Issues Scathing Report on Human Rights Violations in U.S.**

**(Oakland, CA)** As they honor International Migrants Day (IMD) today, immigrant communities are mobilizing around the country to condemn restrictive and repressive U.S. immigration laws and to call for immigration policies based on the principles of dignity, justice, and equality. At the same time, the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR), a national alliance of local coalitions and immigrant, refugee, community, religious, civil rights and labor organizations and activists, released a summary of its first annual report on human rights abuses committed against immigrant and refugee communities titled *Over-Raided, Under Siege: U.S. Immigration Laws and Enforcement Destroy the Rights of Immigrants*. The full report will be released at NNIRR's national conference in Houston, Texas, on January 18.

Produced by NNIRR's new initiative, the Human Rights Immigrant Community Action Network (HURRICANE), the report analyzes over 100 stories of human rights abuses, interviews with community leaders and numerous reports and data that exposes the patterns of human rights violations perpetrated against immigrants in the U.S. *Over-Raided, Under Siege* reports on how the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is leading a new type of assault on the lives, rights and well-being of immigrant families, workers and communities in the U.S.

The report's co-author Arnoldo Garcia commented, "Immigration enforcement and border control policies enacted by the U.S. government and enforced by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) are placing immigrant communities under siege and community members are subjected to racial profiling, detentions and

deportations.” He added, “This in turn is fueling a humanitarian crisis and forcing immigrants to risk their lives daily, and causing untold suffering, deaths and disappearances of hundreds of immigrants every year.”

The report documents how the U.S.-Mexico border region has experienced intensified militarization, becoming a de-constitutionalized zone. It also details that this crisis follows immigrants into the interior due to ICE’s deliberate utilization of high-profile raids in immigrant communities and workplaces as a political response against immigrant rights efforts -- thereby striking fear in those communities and endangering the public safety. The report also highlights how such government efforts act as a catalyst for increasing xenophobia and increasing immigrant communities’ vulnerability to abuse and violence by concluding:

“With the DHS’s ICE, Border Patrol and other local and state law enforcement agencies operating without accountability or effective oversight, immigrants have become especially vulnerable to abuse and violence. Now, immigrants, whether they are documented or undocumented, are the almost exclusive scapegoat for the faltering economy, the deterioration of services and social problems. In this officially condoned anti-immigrant climate, racial profiling, exploitation in the workplace, hate violence and other public policies are being used to deliberately force immigrants to leave or exist in the shadows.”

The report will offer recommendations for U.S. government responsibility to prevent further human rights violations against immigrant communities.

NNIRR also released today a national statement endorsed by almost 100 organizations and calling for greater recognition of the human rights of all immigrants. The annual December 18 statement expressed concern that “migration policies and practices are failing to protect the human rights of migrants and in many cases, cause or contribute to greater and systematic abuse.” It also calls for “a national immigration policy in the U.S. built upon the principles of human security with dignity, justice, and equality, and that uphold the civil and human rights of all people, regardless of their race, color, class, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, immigration or citizenship status.” (To view the full statement and list of endorsers, go to: [www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/Dec18NationalStatement2007-EngEspw.endorsements.pdf](http://www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/Dec18NationalStatement2007-EngEspw.endorsements.pdf))

Additionally, numerous events have been and will be taking place around the country to commemorate International Migrants Day. These include press conference, vigils, cultural events and film-screenings in cities such as Hartford CT, Apopka FL, Tucson AZ, Minneapolis MN and Portland OR. (To view a partial list of events and contact information for each, go to:

[www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/Dec18NationalStatement2007-EngEspw.endorsements.pdf](http://www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/Dec18NationalStatement2007-EngEspw.endorsements.pdf))

For more information on the *Over-Raided, Under Siege* report, visit:

<http://www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/OverRaided,UnderSiegeEXECUTIVESUMMARY12-17-07.pdf> or on International Migrants Day, December 18, visit [www.nnirr.org](http://www.nnirr.org).

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*The National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights is a national alliance of local coalitions and immigrant, refugee, community, religious, civil rights and labor organizations and activists. The National Network advocates for a just immigration and refugee policy in the United States and works to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of immigration status.*