



national network for immigrant and refugee rights

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U.N. Expert on Migrant Rights Slams U.S. Violations of the Human Rights of Migrants, Calls for Compliance with International Laws

Oakland, CA—Today, Jorge Bustamante, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants (SR), presented a scathing report on the abuses being perpetrated against migrants in the United States to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. The SR found that “the United States has failed to adhere to its international obligations to make the human rights of the 37.5 million migrants living in the country a national priority, using comprehensive and coordinated national policy based on clear international obligations.” The SR reports that the human rights violations impacted undocumented and documented migrants alike, as well as U.S. citizens.

“The SR’s report makes it clear that the U.S. government’s laws, policies and practices are the main culprit for the persistent abusive treatment and persecution experienced by immigrant families, workers and communities,” stated Colin Rajah, director of NNIRR’s International Migrant Rights and Global Justice Program. “The SR’s findings are an indictment of U.S. immigration laws and enforcement and reflect the complaints we have documented from communities around the country.”

Mr. Bustamante conducted an investigative visit to the U.S. April 30-May 18, 2007 and met with dozens of immigrant and refugee community grassroots groups, human, labor and civil rights advocates, as well as public officials and law enforcement agencies in California, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, New York and other border and non-border regions of the U.S. The Special Rapporteur found glaring evidence of human rights violations against migrants involving “... indefinite detention, mandatory detention, deportation without due process, family separation, anti-immigrant legislation, racial profiling, linguistic, racial, ethnic, gender and sexual orientation discrimination; State violence; wage theft, forced labour, limited access to health and education; the growing

anti-immigrant climate (including the post 9/11 backlash); and significant limitations on due process and judicial oversight.”

The Special Rapporteur’s report on migrants in the U.S. mirrors the repressive trends of human rights violations detailed in *Over-Raided, Under Siege: U.S. Immigration Laws and Enforcement Destroy the Rights of Immigrants*, produced by HURRICANE, a new initiative of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR) organizing community-based tracking and documenting of abuses committed against immigrants and refugees.

Colin Rajah added, “We agree with the Special Rapporteur’s key recommendations to the U.S. government to ensure that U.S. policies and practices strictly adhere to international human rights norms and standards.” He concluded by saying, “Upholding the human rights of immigrants will not be enough. The U.S. Congress must pass significant immigration reforms that end detentions and deportations, decriminalize immigration status, and provides more legal and safe ways to migrate to the U.S. We will urge the new Administration to support more access and options to legal permanent residency and citizenship, the reunification of families, and the demilitarization of immigration and border control.”

To read the report on the situation of migrants in the U.S. by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, click on:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/7session/A-HRC-7-12-Add2.doc>

To read NNIRR’s report, *Over-Raided, Under Siege*:

http://www.nnirr.org/resources/docs/UnderSiege_web.pdf