

International Detention Coalition

Human rights for detained refugees,
asylum seekers and migrants

Ending Immigration Detention of Children for International Human Rights Day

PRESS RELEASE 10 December 2014

On International Human Rights Day, the International Detention Coalition is calling on the Governments to commit to ending immigration detention of children.

The Coalition, which comprises hundreds of organisations around the world, says millions of children are impacted by detention, and their rights are being violated unnecessarily.

Director of the Coalition, Grant Mitchell, said “countless children have been abused in detention centres around the world in the past year. This is damage to the most vulnerable is unnecessary when we know there are more effective and humane approaches to migration that allow states to achieve policy goals without harming the health and well-being of children.”

“There has been a move in some countries away from detaining children and using more innovative child protection approaches,” said Mr. Mitchell.

Immigration detention is never under any circumstance in the best interests of the child. Conclusive evidence shows that children are being psychologically damaged in detention.

“This international human rights day we are urging more governments to take steps towards ending the use of immigration detention for vulnerable groups, such as children,” Mr. Mitchell said.

The UN Committee which oversees the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, has recommended that children be immediately released from detention and live in non-custodial, community based alternatives to detention while their immigration status is being determined, acknowledging that detention of children on the basis of their migration status constitutes a violation of child rights.

The Coalition chairs an inter-agency working group comprised of sixteen prominent UN groups, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society representatives who collectively represent stakeholders in every country of the world. Together, they have committed to a 3-year term of engagement in which they will seek to assist states to “completely and expeditiously” end the practice of child immigration detention.

Available for interview:

- Grant Mitchell – Director of the International Detention Coalition

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