

International Detention Coalition

Human rights for detained refugees,
asylum seekers and migrants

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INTERVENTION

2nd UN High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

Roundtable 2: Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to women and children, as well as to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and to ensure orderly, regular and safe migration.

3 October 2013
10.00 – 13.00, General Assembly Hall, New York

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Envisioning a world without unnecessary immigration detention

We welcome the discussion today on the human rights of migrants, women and children.

Through our research and work with our members from 67 countries, States and UN partners around the world we know that in the context of migration, upholding human rights is not just an obligation, but can also be beneficial for States, communities and migrants.

This has been noted significantly in the area of immigration detention, which has been found to have a high financial and human cost, particularly its impact on the health and wellbeing of children. The associated risks of physical and sexual abuse and lasting psychological damage means that it can never be in the best interests of a child to detain them simply for migration-related purposes.

Increasingly however we are seeing a number of states end the immigration detention of children and implement alternatives to detention that are proving to be inexpensive, humane and effective.

From community-programs to case management models, we have found a range of good practices globally which show that alternatives on average, are 80% cheaper than detention and can ensure compliance with immigration requirements.

These programs highlight the benefits of government and civil society partnership, while upholding human rights and assisting individuals to contribute not only to their own personal development, but also to the development of origin and host countries.

These are positive examples of how upholding human rights can ensure effective approaches to migration and be in the interest of all, and we call upon states to develop alternatives to detention, and to ensure that no child is detained.

We hope that today's discussion can be turned into practical collaboration between States, UN and civil society in protecting the rights of all migrants, and we note that the proposed 5 year Action Agenda stands as clear way forward in this regard.

Thank you.