

Migrant defenders | Stay in solidarity with migrant rights defenders

03.10.2018

We often look up to governments in the EU to be strong in defending fundamental freedoms, at the UN and through their diplomatic missions. But what about at home?



Confronted with a 'crisis' of migration, some governments in the Western world have been stoking xenophobia and racism, rather than showing migrants respect and upholding their dignity. As former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein pointed out in [his parting message](#), several leading politicians are in fact 'eager to inflate their image by harming migrants and refugees, the most vulnerable in society'.

On top of it all, they are also restricting their own citizens who are trying combat rights abuses.

A panel convened by OHCHR on 27 September, with speakers from the Hungarian Helsinki Foundation, Médecins sans Frontières, and the U.S. Human Rights Network, discussed the challenges faced by defenders of migrant and refugee rights. The organisers also screened [ISHR's short video on the right to defend the rights of people on the move](#), a key focus of the 2018 report by UN Special Rapporteur for human rights defenders Michel Forst.

The people they help face conflict, poverty, and exploitation. They face lawsuits, arrests, and violence. Both migrants and migrants' rights defenders need our support.

To show our solidarity, ISHR has partnered with Cinéma Grütli and Outside the Box. The first 10 people to send an email entitled '**CODE ISHR**' to the producers at libre@outside-thebox.ch will receive two invitations to either the 2 or 6 November screenings in Geneva of the documentary *Libre*, highlighting challenges facing migrant rights defenders in Italy and France.

Photo: ISHR