



ACLU of Massachusetts to Testify at U.N. on New Bedford Raids

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOSTON – On Saturday, May 12, the ACLU of Massachusetts (ACLUM) will testify at a public hearing in New York with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Migration regarding human rights abuses that occurred during the March immigration raids in New Bedford.

The Special Rapporteur, Jorge Bustamante, is conducting a three-week fact-finding mission at the invitation of the United States government, traveling across the country to meet with dozens of human rights and immigrants groups about the conditions of immigrants and migrants living in the United States. The Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the U.N. Human Rights Council with the mandate to monitor, advise and publicly report on human rights situations in specific countries, including the United States, and on human rights violations worldwide.

Later this year, the Special Rapporteur will issue a public report on his findings, including recommendations for how the United States can live up to its commitments to universal human rights standards in relation to immigrants. He will present this report to the U.N. Human Rights Council, where the United States government will have a formal opportunity to respond. This will give advocates within the United States as well as other countries the opportunity to apply pressure on the U.S. government to rectify the situation and meet universally recognized standards of fairness, due process and respect for the rights of immigrants.

Together with its affiliate offices and other organizations, the ACLU has been organizing public hearings and meetings for the Special Rapporteur with victims of human rights violations and national and local authorities.

“The visit of the Special Rapporteur is a critical opportunity to shed light on human rights violations of migrants in the United States,” said Jamil Dakwar, Advocacy Director for the ACLU Human Rights Program. “All persons deserve to be treated with dignity, regardless of their immigration status.”

Laura Rótolo, a lawyer with ACLUM who has been working on the lawsuit against the government on behalf of the New Bedford workers, will testify that the way in which the raid was carried out violated the rights of the workers and their families. “Children were left without proper supervision and the workers were denied access to lawyers. These are violations of basic human rights, and the world needs to know about them,” Rótolo said.

PRESS RELEASE

The Special Rapporteur's official visit includes tours of the U.S.-Mexico border in Arizona and immigrant detention facilities in Arizona, Texas and New Jersey. The ACLU is documenting the visit with blog posts, podcasts, video and news updates at www.aclu.org/humanrightsofmigrants.

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