



## 18 December: We must recognise the universal and indivisible rights of migrants

Every year for International Migrants day, celebrated on 18 December, AEDH joins with European civil society organisations to call on the EU and its Member States to sign and ratify the **International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families** adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 18 December 1990.

Our association regrets that we must issue this call yet again for 2014, a year in which the final European “packet” on migrant workers was adopted. These directives are a clear manifestation of the EU’s unwillingness to view migrants who come to work and live in our countries as more than mere instruments for the creation of wealth in our nations. The EU is incapable of respecting international conventions – with which many Member States actually agree – and even its own rules, namely Article 20 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights that states that “everyone is equal before the law.”

The UN convention does not establish any new rights, nor does it take sides in the debate on immigration policy and national laws. It simply groups together the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights already set out in the international pacts ratified by most of our countries. In doing so, it recognises the indivisible and universal fundamental rights of migrants without distinguishing between the legal statuses they may hold. As the name of the convention clearly indicates, it does not disassociate migrants from their families, affording family members the same fundamental rights.

The situation begs the question why Member States are refusing to ratify the text. It is undoubtedly because the convention clearly marks the boundaries of what is unacceptable and reminds them of their duty to guarantee people’s rights, including those of non-nationals, who are subject to authority checks and repression rather than respect.

AEDH hereby calls on the European MPs to renew the invitation issued by the Assembly to the Member States in February 2005 and October 2005<sup>1</sup> to sign the UN convention and to support its universal

<sup>1</sup> European Parliament resolution on the EU's priorities and recommendations for the 61st session of the UN Commission on Human Rights; 24 February 2005 – P6\_TA(2005)0051 – <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P6-TA-2005-0051+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

ratification. The association also requests that the European Council lends its support to initiatives that contribute to the recognition of the universal and indivisible rights of migrants. Additionally, AEDH asks that civil society organisations and all European citizens consistently show their support for the full recognition of the fundamental rights of the many migrant workers living alongside them.

European Association for the Defense of Human Rights (AEDH)  
Österreichische Liga Für Menschenrechte (OLFM) – Austria  
Ligue des Droits de L’Homme (LDH) – Belgium  
Liga voor Mensenrechten (LVM) – Belgium  
European Association For The Defence Of Human Rights – Bulgaria  
Hrvatski Pravni Centar / Croatian Law Center – Croatia  
Action For Equality, Support, Antiracism (KISA) – Cyprus  
Czech Helsinki Committee - Czech Republic  
Legal Information Centre for Human Rights (LICHR) – Estonia  
Ihmisoikeusliitto / Finnish League For Human Rights - Finland  
Ligue des droits de l’homme - France  
Internationale Liga Für Menschenrechte (ILMF) – Germany  
Hellenic League for Human Rights (HLHR) – Greece  
Lega Italiana Dei Diritti Dell’uomo (LIDU) – Italia  
Latvian Human Rights Committee (LHRC) – Latvia  
Lithuanian Human Rights Association (LHRA) – Lithuania  
Action Luxembourg Ouvert Et Solidaire (ALOS – LDH) – Luxembourg  
Malta Association Of Human Rights (MAHR) – Malta  
Liga Voor De Rechten Van De Mens (LVM) – Netherlands  
Otwarta Rzeczpospolita – Poland  
Black and Ethnic Minorities Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS) – Scotland  
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía (APDHA) – Spain  
Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya (IDHC) – Spain  
Ligue Suisse Des Droits De L’homme (LSDH) - Switzerland

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**The European Association for the Defence of Human Rights** (Association Européenne pour la défense des Droits de l’Homme - AEDH) consists of associations and leagues defending human rights in the countries of the European Union. For more information, visit <http://www.aedh.eu/>.