

## Human Rights Council, 42<sup>nd</sup> Session

General Debate on Item 2 - Annual report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Oral statement delivered by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Madam High Commissioner,

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) appreciates your call upon States “to address the human rights impact of climate change, including in relation to business activities” and the reminder of “the need for policy coherence – nationally and internationally”<sup>1</sup>.

As you highlighted, the consequences of climate change are the reason for many people to leave their homes.

Madam High Commissioner, Excellencies,

The human rights of people on the move are constantly threatened and violated. How can we tolerate caged kids, family members divided at borders and shipwrecked survivors refused a place at safety or forced back or deported<sup>2</sup> into areas of conflict, deprivation, discrimination and violation.

We support the call to European States to adopt a more effective coordinated action in the Mediterranean and to end the criminalisation of civil organisations that are carrying out life-saving work in the area and are fined for doing it.

This summer we have witnessed too many rescue boats seeking too long for a safe place to disembark. Sea Watch<sup>3</sup>, Open Arms<sup>4</sup>, Mare Jonio<sup>5</sup>, Eleonore<sup>6</sup>, to mention just some examples.

It took the courage of such individuals as Carola Rackete to choose humanity over political propaganda to guarantee safety and human rights for migrants; an act of civil disobedience against a ministerial order contrary to International and Human Rights Law. It took the orders of judges to respect international law and to decriminalize the rescuing of people and to re-establish that under the Law rescue is an obligation and the prohibition on entering domestic waters cannot cancel a humanitarian obligation under the International Conventions<sup>7</sup>.

Thank you.

---

<sup>1</sup> High Commissioner Annual report at 42<sup>nd</sup> HRC.

<sup>2</sup> <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/08/turkeys-deportation-policy-is-killing-syrian-refugees-assad-erdogan-akp-chp/#>

<sup>3</sup> Disembarked at Lampedusa on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2019.

<https://sea-watch.org/en/sw-and-cpt-enforce-human-rights-eu-failed/>

<sup>4</sup> Disembarked at Lampedusa on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2019.

<https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/20/eight-migrants-urgently-evacuated-from-open-arms-rescue-boat>

<sup>5</sup> Disembarked at Lampedusa on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019.

[https://www.ilmessaggero.it/italia/migranti\\_mare\\_jonio\\_ultime\\_notizie\\_eleonore-4711207.html](https://www.ilmessaggero.it/italia/migranti_mare_jonio_ultime_notizie_eleonore-4711207.html)

<sup>6</sup> Disembarked at Pozzallo, Sicily on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019. <http://ca.mobile.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSKCN1VN0WL>

<sup>7</sup> Agrigento Court, order N. 3169/19 R.G.N.R., N. 2592/19 R.G.GIP