Unlawful death of refugees and migrants – a forward-looking approach

Side-event in the margins of the 72nd session of the General Assembly

Organized by

Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,
Dr. Agnes Callamard

27 October 2017, 10 to 12 a.m.
Conference room 8
United Nations Headquarters New York

Introduction
The mass scale of casualties among refugees and migrants during their flight demands urgent attention at national, regional and international levels. The report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to the 72nd General Assembly (A/72/335) focuses on this issue and addresses killings by both State and non-State actors as well as denounces a quasi-generalized regime of impunity, worsened by an absence of accurate data on the dead and missing. The Special Rapporteur presents evidence that suggests multiple failures on the part of States to respect and protect refugees’ and migrants’ right to life, as well as presents some best practices, including in search and rescue at sea and for the dignified treatment of the dead. She calls urgently on States to uphold the equal protection of all lives, regardless of migration status, recalling that it is a central underpinning of the entire international human rights system and to address this human rights crisis by prioritizing the protection of the right to life in their migration and refugee policies. To this end, the Special Rapporteur presents recommendations addressed to States, intergovernmental organizations and other actors.

Focus of discussions
The topic of discussion will focus on the way forward by building on the best practices identified and conclusions reached in the report of the Special Rapporteur, and others. It seeks to engage all stakeholders in an active discussion and formulating a comprehensive strategy for scaling up best practices and implementation of recommendations identified by all stakeholders.

Panellists are requested to focus their presentations on:

- Examples of “best practices” in preventing or responding to the violations of the right to life of refugees and migrants;
- Suggestions for scaling up these best practices and/or other recommendations;
- Proposals for next steps to implement these recommendations, including the biggest hurdles, in their view, preventing implementation.

Panellists

- Agnes Callamard, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (moderator)
- Grainne O’Hara, Deputy Director UNHCR New York
- Admiral Nicola Carlone, Head of the 3rd Department of the plans and operations of the general command and Lieutenant of vessel Elisa Giangrasso - Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre General Command
- Robin Reineke, Executive Director, Colibri Centre for Human Rights
- Catriona Jarvis, Co-convener, Last Rights, UK Judge (retired)
- Daughter of a woman disappeared on the US-Mexico border
- Ambassador Representative/Co-Moderator of Global Compact (TBC)
- MSF Senior Representative (TBC)

Please note that the event will be held in English.