



Xenophobia, Hate Crimes & Refugee Protection

**Friday 2 October 2009, 09.00 to 10.00
Room XXIII, Palais des Nations**

Human Rights First and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies invite you to this event at the 2009 meeting of UNHCR's Executive Committee:

In recent years, xenophobia has been on the rise in many parts of the world. At its most extreme, xenophobia has taken the form of bias-motivated violence. Refugees and asylum seekers in Africa, migrant workers in central Asia, and Muslim immigrants are among the many groups affected by bias-motivated violence, which takes the form of attacks on individuals and property. Underreporting of these crimes is endemic as refugees and migrants often do not report incidents to state authorities due to fear of deportation or mistrust of local law enforcement authorities. While states have the primary obligation to address bias-motivated violence, intergovernmental and nongovernmental bodies also play key roles in ensuring accountability for violent acts motivated by discrimination and intolerance.

The panel will address the rise in xenophobic and other violent hate crimes and the impact on refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Panelists will address the following questions: What can and should be done to ensure the protection of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from these attacks? What can states do to proactively address these issues? What is being done by the OSCE, UNHCR, IOM and others? Have these steps been coordinated and effective, and what more can be done to address this problem? What role can and should UNHCR, IOM, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and others play? How can the international community work together to better ensure protection for the affected populations?

This panel will be translated into French.

Speakers:

- **Paul LeGendre** – Director, Fighting Discrimination Program, Human Rights First
- **Robert Paiva** – Director of External Relations, International Organization for Migration
- **Duncan Breen** – Advocacy Officer, Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
- **Volker Turk** – Director, International Protection, UNHCR

For further information on the panel please contact Jesse Bernstein at Human Rights First:
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