



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Sixty-first session

23 February–2 April 2026

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Written statement submitted by Servas International, a non- governmental organization on the roster\***

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[2 February 2026]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## Immigration Enforcement Practices

As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all human beings are born free and are equal in dignity and rights.

These principles are further reflected in the binding international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which prohibit arbitrary detention, racial discrimination, and violations of due process.

In a world facing so many challenges, and where some are more eager to build walls than bridges, and close their borders to the vulnerable, civil society has a key role to play.

Servas International (Servas), as an NGO committed to peace founded in 1949, is deeply concerned by current actions against migrants in many parts of the world.

The brutality experienced by migrants is often fueled by unnecessary hate speech at the highest levels of Government.

As Servas members, committed to peace through intercultural communication, we are deeply troubled by all forms of hate, brutality and racism against people of any background, which has often resulted in arbitrary, unlawful and flawed decisions.

For example, Volker Türk, High Commissioner for Human Rights, noted that “numerous migration policies now being implemented by ... authorities are resulting in arbitrary and unlawful arrests and detentions, as well as flawed removal decisions”.

We speak out for the human rights and dignity of all people, including refugees and migrants struggling for their survival. We ask for all people to be treated with respect and for all actions to be taken after due diligence.

As Servas International Representatives to the United Nations, we support the demand for immediate redress, civilian review, and legal accountability for perpetrators of violence and for harsh measures undermining human rights and solidarity, including the separation of families. We support the elimination of systemic racism, inequality, and human rights abuses, including police brutality, and urge that no one turn a blind eye to injustice.

The repression of peaceful protest and the intimidation of migrant communities have a chilling effect on democratic participation and civic space, undermining the rule of law and the very foundations of democracy.

In the face of rising intolerance and hate speech, Servas values of non-discrimination, solidarity and cooperation are more precious than ever. In solidarity with the “Human Rights Watch”, we seek a climate that protects all communities around the world from violence, discrimination, and unlawful detention, and ensures that the rights to free expression and assembly are respected.

The purpose of the Servas network is to help build world peace, goodwill and understanding by providing opportunities for personal contact among people of different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities. Servas is convinced that such exchanges can contribute to social cohesion and a more just and peaceful society by strengthening grassroots connections.

We reiterate that racism and anti-migrant sentiment stand in direct opposition to our goal of fostering dialogue between nations and promoting international understanding.

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