

# Media Statement

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## **UN experts urge Italian authorities to curb xenophobic attitude towards migrant workers**

GENEVA – Two UN human rights experts on migrants and racism urged the Italian authorities to take all necessary measures to curb the growing xenophobic attitude towards migrant workers, which led last week to the tragic events in the city of Rosarno (Calabria, Southern Italy). “Violence, be it perpetrated by Italians or by migrant workers, must be addressed in the most vigorous manner through the rule of law and human rights should always be protected, regardless of immigration status”, they said.

At least 53 people were injured during two days of unrest, and more than 1000 migrant workers were sent to the Bari and Crotona centres. Among them, numerous immigrants have already started to be deported by the authorities.

“The violence which erupted in Rosarno is extremely worrying since it reveals serious and deep-rooted problems of racism against those migrant workers,” said in a joint statement the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, Jorge Bustamante and the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Githu Muigai.

“The Italian authorities must show their continuous and firm commitment to creating a safe and peaceful environment for all,” said the UN experts. “This includes finding ways to improve the very poor living and working conditions of these migrant workers – part of whom are often trafficked into the country for exploitation purposes – and to implement an immigration policy in full conformity with international human rights standards”.

While welcoming the initial steps taken by the authorities to enquire into the events, Mr. Muigai and Mr. Bustamante stressed that “it is more than ever urgent for the Italian authorities to strengthen their anti-racism activities, provide human rights education, as well as swiftly denounce hate speech and prosecute the racist and violent actions perpetrated by some individuals.”

“Violence cannot and must never be a means to respond to difficulties under any circumstances,” said both UN Special Rapporteurs.

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*For more information on the work and mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance write to: [racism@ohchr.org](mailto:racism@ohchr.org), or visit the website <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/racism/rapporteur/index.htm>*

*For more information on the work and mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, write to: [migrant@ohchr.org](mailto:migrant@ohchr.org), or visit the website <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/migration/rapporteur/index.htm>*

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