**FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council**

**General Debate Item 2: Lethal Disregard for the Rights of Migrants**

High Commissioner, we thank you for consistently raising widespread and severe violations of the human rights of migrants.

1,484 people are recorded to have died whilst migrating since the last session of the Human Rights Council.[[1]](#footnote-1) The individual lives lost in migration include:

* Jakelin Caal Maquin, who was 7 when she died in immigration detention due to a bacterial infection[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Abdel Kader Hanna, who died by electrocution while on top of a freight train[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Mohamed Zobair, who was 7 when he drowned trying to seek safety in a neighbouring country[[4]](#footnote-4)

Jakelin, Abdel and Mohamed and the 3,836 others who have died in transit in the last year[[5]](#footnote-5) are victims of what you, High Commissioner, have called “lethal disregard”.[[6]](#footnote-6) This lethal disregard is rooted in discrimination and perpetuated by impunity. It extends to criminalising those who act in compassion and solidarity.

The Human Rights Council has been repeatedly reminded of the systemic violations taking place, but it has not yet responded effectively.

A more focused and systematic approach to addressing these violations wherever they take place could include:

* Mandating a committee of experts to investigate policies and practices that cause or exacerbate the risk of deaths in transit
* Following up on the Global Migration Group’s Principles and Guidelines on migrants in vulnerable situations
* Holding a migrant voices Panel to ground the Council’s action in the experiences of migrants

This Council must step up its efforts to end this lethal disregard for the lives of migrants.

ENDS

Delivered by Laurel Townhead

1. International Organization for Migration, Missing Migrants Project, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>, data accessed 26 February 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ‘UN expert requests full investigation of migrant girl’s death in the US, urges end to migration detention of children’ (24 December 2018) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24045&LangID=E>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ‘The List’ compiled by UNITED Against Refugee Deaths. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. AP News, ‘Myanmar attacks, sea voyage rob young father of everything’ (October 27 2017) <https://apnews.com/8972bde7517d4e7aba770fb124a40726>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. International Organization for Migration, Missing Migrants Project, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>, data accessed 26 February 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Global update at the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council, Opening statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet (9 September 2019), <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24956&LangID=E>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)