



GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT

*Keynote Address: The Global Spread of Arbitrary
Immigration Detention*

*MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES – ITALY
General Assembly 2026*

By Michael Flynn

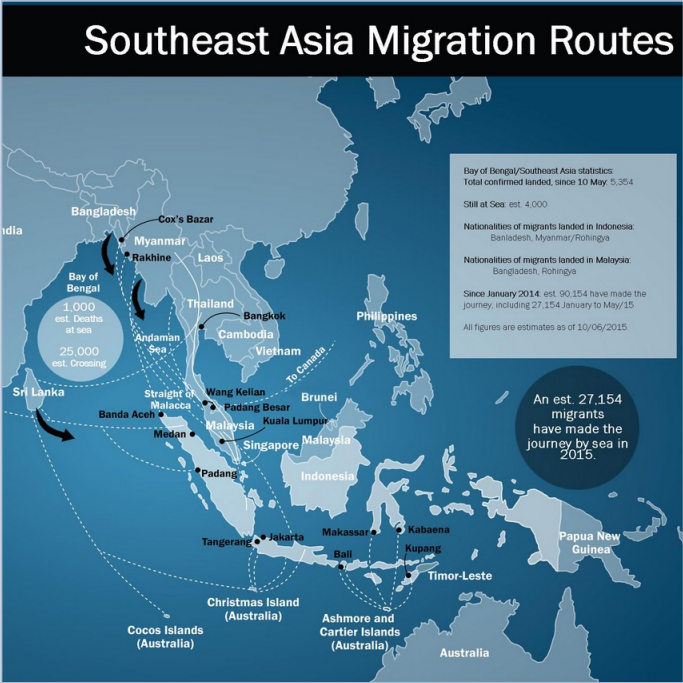
MSF-Italy:
General Assembly
Rome 11 April 2026

SLIDE 1: GDP Mission

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is a non-profit organisation based in Geneva that promotes the human rights of people who have been detained for reasons related to their non-citizen status. Our mission is:

- To **promote the human rights** of detained migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- To **ensure transparency** in the treatment of immigration detainees
- To **reinforce advocacy** aimed at reforming detention systems
- To **nurture policy-relevant scholarship** on the causes and consequences of migration control policies

SLIDE 2: Mapping detention on migration routes



SIDE 3: Detention Centers around the World



SLIDE 4: GDP Map of Detention Sites



Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief; the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls

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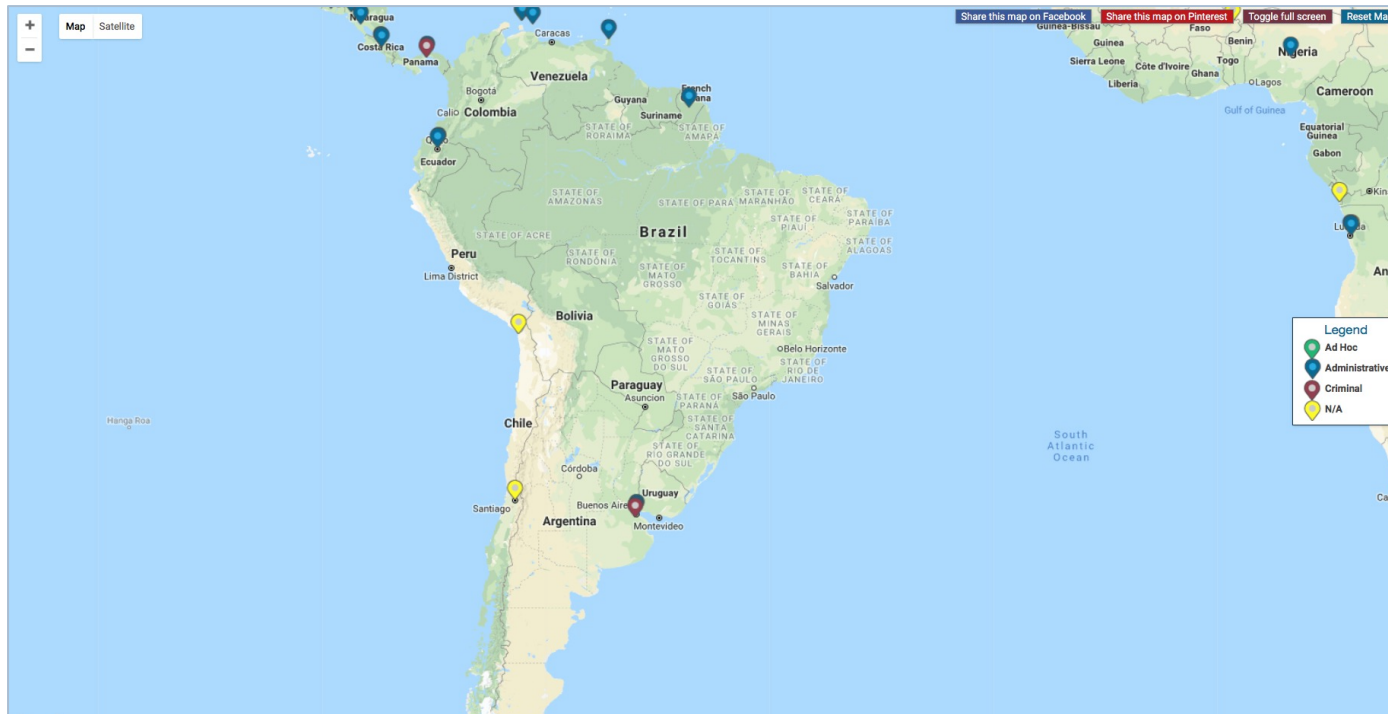
17 December 2024

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief; Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children and Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 52/20, 53/14, 52/9, 50/17, 49/5, 53/9 and 50/18.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received **concerning certain provisions of the recently adopted "Asylum Law", and the impact it would have on the human**

SLIDE 6: Detention centres in South America



SLIDE 7: EXTERNAL CONTEXT OF SPREAD OF DETENTION

- Increasing scapegoating of migrants and refugees for societal problems.
- The emergence of populist political regimes that eschew a rules-based international order.
- Growing financial crises across the UN system.
- Diminishing global support for regional and international human rights mechanisms.

SLIDE 8: THREE INHERENT ASPECTS OF IMMIGRATION

- I. People in immigration detention typically are not charged with crimes and thus are not afforded the full protection of the law.
- II. Immigration detainees are not supposed to return to the societies where they are detained.
- III. Countries often hide or disguise their immigration detention practices.

Any initiative that seeks to prevent the spread of harmful immigration detention practices must:

- **Ensure that harmful practices get local and global attention**
- **Develop evidence that can be used to mobilize protections that extend beyond local jurisdictions, focusing on universal human rights norms**
- **Empower those who have lived through it—or who are most vulnerable to it—to document it, report it, and be the leading voices for change.**



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