



Press Conference

International Migrants Day 18 December 2019, 12pm CEST.

International legal complaint & expert report on Italy's role in privatised push-backs to Libya

Auditorium 2, Maison de la Paix , [The Graduate Institute](#), Geneva

In the afternoon of November 7, 2018, a group of 93 migrants were forcefully returned to war-torn Libya after they were rescued by a Panamanian merchant ship, the Nivin, in the high seas of the Central Mediterranean. The Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCCC) was responsible for instructing the Nivin to rescue a distressed migrant boat and to liaise with the Libyan Coast Guard (LYCG). The LYCG then directed the Nivin towards Libya, where the captured passengers were violently removed from the vessel by Libyan security forces using tear gas and rubber as well as live bullets after a 10-day standoff. The migrants were then arbitrarily disembarked, detained, and subjected to multiple forms of ill-treatment, including torture. This event is part of a trend towards “privatized push-backs” as a form of delegated rescue/interdiction to enforce border control.

This press conference will announce details on two ground-breaking interventions on this controversial practice. [Forensic Oceanography](#) will release its thorough reconstruction of this incident and the [Global Legal Action Network](#) (GLAN) will announce an unprecedented international legal complaint being filed against Italy on behalf of one of the survivors of the Nivin events. The complaint is the first to tackle this phenomenon of “privatized push-backs”, whereby EU coastal States engage commercial ships to return refugees and other persons in need of protection back to unsafe locations in contravention of their human rights obligations.

Participants

Charles Heller, Goldsmiths, University of London, co-founder of the *Forensic Oceanography* project;
Noemi Magugliani, **Dr Violeta Moreno-Lax** and **Dr Gearóid Ó Cuinn**, Global Legal Action Network; **Julien Raickman**, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Head of Mission in Libya;

Moderated by: Vincent Chetail, Professor of International Law & Director of Global Migration Centre

A press release and access to Forensic Oceanography/Forensic Architecture report is available upon request **under embargo until 18 December 2019**. Contact gocuinn@glanlaw.org (English) or noemi.magugliani@gmail.com (Italian)

Location: Auditorium 2, Maison de la Paix , [The Graduate Institute](#), Geneva