

Center For Constitutional Rights

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://ccrjustice.org/home/blog/2021/10/20/oral-argument-aref-v-garland-our-case-against-prison-isolation-units-0>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

The CCR blog

Aref v. Garland is our longstanding case challenging the Federal Bureau of Prison's Communication Management Units (CMUs). These isolation units in Terre Haute, Indiana, and Marion, Illinois, have been shrouded in secrecy since their inception as part of the post-9/11 "counterterrorism" framework implemented by the Bush administration, and remain a lesser-known tool in the War on Terror that inflicts serious harm on people in prison and denies them due process rights.

CMUs are disproportionately used for Muslims, those with unpopular views, and political prisoners, who are subject to extreme isolation and restrictions on visits and communications and a lack of transparency and accountability regarding their placement in and possible removal from the special units.

Nothing will fix the damage done to my family during my years in the CMU, but a determination that my rights were violated would give me some relief[and] it would help my children and wife come to peace with what happened to our family. [Kifah Jayyousi](#), plaintiff in *Aref v. Garland*

Oral argument in *Aref v. Garland* took place before the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.

We filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit Wednesday demanding information about the U.S. governments wrongful deportation of asylum seekers to Cameroon, where a civil war has displaced some 700,000 people. This FOIA lawsuit, filed in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, builds on [previous requests](#) the U.S. government disregarded and follows civil rights complaints that have gone unanswered.

We joined Project South and the Southern Poverty Law Center filed the lawsuit in response to concerns from activists who have been supporting Cameroonian migrants, including members of a grassroots coalition called the [Alliance in Defense of Black Immigrants](#). It is part of an effort to hold the U.S. government accountable for its brutal treatment of Black immigrants and to protect them from further harm.

Learn more [on our website](#).

The [Black Alliance for Just Immigration](#) held a National Week of Action in Support of Black Migrants last week to highlight the ways Black migrants are impacted by immigration policies.

The Until Were Free table, a coalition of racial and immigrant justice organizations convened by BAJI is demanding basic human rights for Black Migrants.

Recently, the world saw graphic images of US border patrol agents whipping Black migrants. You have watched as the Biden administration has ignored calls to stop the deportation of about 10,000 Haitians and other Black asylum seekers. We are witnessing one of the largest mass expulsions of migrants in recent US history. The Biden administration continues to break its promise that racial justice will inform its policies.

Learn more and read the joint letter to the Biden administration [on BAJI's website](#).

Lessons for Social Justice Lawyers: Michael Ratner, A Warrior for Justice
Tuesday, October 26, 2021 | 46 p.m.

Please join Hofstra Law's Monroe H. Freedman Institute for the Study of Legal Ethics on Tuesday, October 26, at 4:00 p.m. ET for a panel discussion commemorating the life of Michael Ratner.

Michael Ratner handled some of the most significant human rights cases of his time and left a remarkable legacy of progressive and radical lawyering. His autobiography, *Moving the Bar*, was recently published. The panel of prominent lawyers who worked closely with Michael will examine his work and explore Michael's lessons for future social justice lawyers. Deputy Legal Director [Maria LaHood](#) and Executive Director [Vince Warren](#) will speak on the panel.

This event is free, open to the public, and will be held via Zoom, and [RSVP is required](#). Registrants will be emailed a link to the Zoom session prior to the event.

War on Terror Film Festival

We're excited to co-sponsor the [War on Terror Film Festival](#), a month-long, virtual program organized by the Coalition for Civil

Freedoms featuring 20 award-winning films made over the last 20 years that document abuses, highlight crimes, and satirize absurdities of the so-called War on Terror.

On Friday, October 29, our own Senior Staff Attorney [Katherine Gallagher](#) will join speakers to reflect on the film [Ghosts of Abu Ghraib](#). Please check the festival schedule for the exact time.

For the schedule of screenings and conversations throughout October, FAQs, registration, and panelist information, visit the [War on Terror Film Festival website](#).

[View the discussion thread.](#)

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