

## **International Migrants Day at OWS 'Immigrants Occupy'**

by Tania Bruguera

I'm here today from Immigrant Movement International representing more than 200 artists from around the world who have stepped up in defense and support of immigrant respect. You can see them all here represented by these signs carried by artists and other supporters.

I'm here today as an artist who is an immigrant because most artists are migrants by nature and because solidarity is our wealth.

We are working on a campaign to introduce a new ribbon for immigrant respect. The ribbon has the colors of earth and water, the two main entry points of any migrant in the world. We want this ribbon to be an unspoken solidarity to all of us, immigrants, people who deserve respect. We brought today the manifesto that we have prepared with scholars, lawyers, community members to share with you. As we speak, it is being read by artists around the world.

The immigrants including those fleeing war zones, fleeing places impoverished by corporations are not the ones who should be deported. They are the people imagining they can be part of a better future, they are the ones giving it all to make it possible. The ones who should be deported are the corporations profiting from the injustices toward immigrants.

As a sign of solidarity, I want all of us today to use the word citizen-not in reference to a legal status but to refer to a person who is a contributing member of our society and who works hard to make us all proud of it, that is what an immigrant does, therefore an immigrant is a citizen. We all live together in this society and we know that the poor way we treat immigrants today will be our dishonor tomorrow.

We have been called many names. Aliens, are we aliens? (cries of "Nooo"). Undesirables are we undesirable? (cries of "Nooo"). They call us terrorists are we terrorists? (cries of "Nooo"). They call us criminals. Are we criminals? (cries of "Nooo"). They call us illegal. Are we illegal? (cries of "Nooo"). Of course, because no human is illegal.

The latest news has proven that when the rights of migrants are denied the rights of citizens are at risk.

Dignity has no nationality.