



US Human Rights Network  
250 Georgia Ave NE Unit 330  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
[jwilliams@ushrnetwork.org](mailto:jwilliams@ushrnetwork.org)  
404 588 9761

**Talking Points: Hold the US Accountable: Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)-  
Human Rights Campaign**

**The federal government must appropriately acknowledge the right to evacuees to be considered a category of special concern**

Individuals from the Gulf Coast afflicted by Hurricane Gustav have been referred to as “Evacuees” or “Victims”. Member organizations of the US Human Rights Network, its organizational allies and individual friends contend that these classifications fail to properly conceptualize those displaced within any nationally or internationally recognized category of concern.

**According to the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, the internationally recognized normative framework for internal displacement, is clearly defined, and must be applied to individuals that are displaced by Hurricane Gustav.**

Internally Displaced Persons are defined as those persons or groups of persons who have forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disaster, and who have not crossed internationally recognized State border.

**The Government of the United States, through its principle development agency, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recognizes the category of internal displacement and has developed a comprehensive strategy in which “IDP’s should be granted the full security and protection provided under applicable norms of international human rights laws, international humanitarian law and national law”.**

We request and demand that the United States government employ those same principles and approaches to assist those persons displaced by Hurricane Gustav as it would apply within scope of an international disaster of Hurricane Gustav magnitude elsewhere outside of the United States.



US Human Rights Network  
250 Georgia Ave NE Unit 330  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
[jwilliams@ushrnetwork.org](mailto:jwilliams@ushrnetwork.org)  
404 588 9761

**With sovereignty comes responsibility, and thus the Government of the United States, in its response to the Gulf Coast disaster has responsibilities to fulfill.**

These responsibilities include, the protection of IDP's during all phases of displacement, the protection of the right to life, liberty and security, access to basic shelter and housing, access to essential medical services and sanitation, access to education, that the special concerns of women and children are protected, the ability to be able to participate in the planning and management of their return, resettlement and reintegration into their communities

**The United States Government needs to acknowledge the legitimacy of the category of internal displacement and assume the responsibilities delineated in the *Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement***

The US Government needs to recognize Hurricane Gustav Evacuees as internally displaced persons and extend them the protections as delineated by the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the US Government needs to develop a comprehensive domestic strategy, similar to its international framework, to ensure accountability and evaluation of the efficacy of programs and aid related to internally displaced people in the US, and that the assistance and protection are extended throughout the duration of the crisis.

**We also appeal to the International community.**

Particularly the United Nations and the Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, should recognize those evacuated as a result of Hurricane Gustav as internally displaced persons, and ensure that US national authorities respect and adhere to the spirit of the *Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement*.