



Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition

October 21st, 2020

Jeff Crippen

President and CEO of
Omni Air International, LLC
3303 N Sheridan Road, Hangar 19
Tulsa, OK 74115

Rich Corrado,

President and CEO of ATSG
145 Hunter Drive
Wilmington, Ohio 45177

Re: Grave concerns over the role of your company, Omni Air International, in the deportation of black immigrants from the USA to Cameroon, where they could be illegally detained, tortured, or killed.

Dear Jeff and Rich,

I am writing on behalf of TASSC International and other organizations signing on this letter, about our grave concerns over the mass, sudden deportation of African asylum seekers by the U.S. government. This precipitous action will almost certainly result in the unlawful torture, incarceration, and perhaps the death of many innocent individuals. Any involvement by your company in these deportations makes Omni complicit in a shocking violation of basic international human rights law. We trust that, as an airline company with a trusted reputation, you would want to be made urgently aware of this situation. TASSC, the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC) was established to meet the needs of survivors of torture and persecution and to advocate for the prevention of torture and support for its survivors. Since 1998, TASSC has served more than 7,000 torture survivors from more than 72 countries. TASSC provides an array of services, including social services, counseling, legal representation, workforce development, and advocacy to end torture worldwide.

In recent years, we have seen an alarming increase in the number of survivors of torture and persecution by the government of Cameroon and its collaborators. However, it is asylum seekers from this very nation who are now targeted by ICE for mass deportation and a return to the torture and persecution from which they fled. We understand that your company was responsible last week for transporting a plane filled with these persecution survivors back to the brutal conditions of their home country. We also understand that further flights may be planned, leading to the mass deportation of more black African asylum seekers. We hope that, once you and your company understand the dire implications of these actions, you will cease to participate in them.

TASSC, working with other concerned human rights organizations, has amassed overwhelming evidence of the torture and persecution of innocent persons from Cameroon whose only “offense” is their opposition to widespread political oppression and violence on the part of their government and regime supporters.

With no choice but to flee their home countries to escape torture and persecution, increasing numbers of asylum seekers from Cameroon have made arduous journeys to the U.S. border to obtain refuge under basic U.S. and international human rights laws.

Sadly, there is also mounting evidence that their treatment at the border and in U.S. detention breaches well-settled legal principles, even including the use of physical violence, pepper spray, and threats by ICE agents and contractors to force these asylum seekers into deportation.

TASSC respectfully requests the opportunity to talk with you about these gross human rights violations and to provide your company with the accumulated evidence of the torture and persecution of Cameroonian individuals both in their home country and in ICE custody. We ask as well that you immediately suspend any cooperation with ICE that your company may be contemplating in the near future until you have had the opportunity to review this evidence. We are confident that, after you consider the facts, your company will step back from any further participation in this human rights scandal.

I will be in touch with you soon to arrange a virtual meeting to discuss this crisis and provide you with the evidence that you need to be sure that further decisions regarding your company’s involvement with the mass deportation of Cameroonian asylum seekers is guided by simple decency and regard for basic human rights. Thank you very much for your consideration, and I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Léonce Byimana



Executive Director

Torture Abolition and Survivors support Coalition International (TASSC)

Signing organizations:

Al Otro Lado
Baker Interfaith Friends
Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights
Bridges Faith International
Cada Mariposa
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Central American Students Association at Harvard University
Community Asylum Seekers Project
Community Church of Durham (Immigrant Housing/Accompaniment Team)
Des Moines Showing Up for Racial Justice
Diane Paul- Activist, former Human Rights Watch, former UN consultant on protection
Etowah Visitation Project
Freedom for immigrants
Friends of Angola
Fuerza Mundial, the FMG Continuum
Global Community Initiative
Grannies Respond / Abuelas Responden, Inc.
Guadalupe Presbyterian Church Detention Ministry
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Harvard Graduate School of Education Latinx Alumni Network
Hope Border Institute
Houston Migrant Outreach Coalition
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
Ice Out of Tarrant
Immigrant Action Alliance
Indivisible Sacramento
Interfaith Community for Detained Immigrants (ICDI)

Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness and Advocacy Network
Iowans for Immigrant Freedom
National Justice for Our Neighbors
NH Conference United Church of Christ Immigrant and Refugee Support Group
NOLA Grannies Respond
NorCal Resist
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Orange County Equality Coalition
Orange County Rapid Response Network
Partnerships for Trauma Recovery
Prairielands Freedom Fund
Program for Torture Victims
Refugee Support Network
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur - EW
Sojourners
SOLACE visitation group at Otay Mesa Detention Center
Southern Poverty Law Center
Stony Brook Asylee Advocate Group
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice (SCIJ)
The Mami Chelo Foundation Inc.
The Miller Family
United Fort Worth
USC International Human Rights Clinic
Witness at the Border