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Open Borders Manifesto

On Open Borders Day 2015, the 16th day of March, we marked the third anniversary of *Open Borders: The Case*. We also published the Open Borders Manifesto, a brief document summarising the objectives of the open borders movement.

The list of signatories is in alphabetical order, based on surname, and is current as of May 3, 2015. If you would like to add yourself to the signatory list, [please contact us](#) (preferably via email: openborders@googlegroups.com) and provide your name, with professional or academic affiliations if applicable.

Open Borders Manifesto

Freedom of movement is a basic liberty that governments should respect and protect unless justified by extenuating circumstances. This extends to movement across international boundaries.

International law and many domestic laws already recognise the right of any individual to leave his or her country. This right may only be circumscribed in extreme circumstances, where threats to public safety or order are imminent.

We believe international and domestic law should similarly extend such protections to individuals seeking to enter another country. Although there may be times when governments should treat foreign nationals differently from domestic citizens, freedom of movement and residence are fundamental rights that should only be circumscribed when the situation absolutely warrants.

The border enforcement status quo is both morally unconscionable and economically destructive. Border controls predominantly restrict the movement of people who bear no ill intentions. Most of the people legally barred from moving across international borders today are fleeing persecution or poverty, desire a better job or home, or simply want to see the city lights.

The border status quo bars ordinary people from pursuing the life and opportunity they desire, not because they lack merit or because they pose a danger to others. Billions of

people are legally barred from realising their full potential and ambitions purely on the basis of an accident of birth: where they were born. This is both a drain on the economic and innovative potential of human societies across the world, and indefensible in any order that recognises the moral worth and dignity of every human being.

We seek legal and policy reforms that will reduce and eventually remove these bars to movement for billions of ordinary people around the world. The economic toll of the modern restrictive border regime is vast, the human toll incalculable. To end this, we do not need a philosopher's utopia or a world government. As citizens and human beings, we only demand accountability from our own governments for the senseless immigration laws that they enact in our name. Border controls should be minimised to only the extent required to protect public health and security. International borders should be open for all to cross, in both directions.

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