

# SAFETY

*First they tell you to be quiet. Then they tell you what you are not allowed to wear, to say, to learn, to do, to believe. They break into your home in the middle of the night. They ask questions and accuse you of things you have not done. They point their guns at you. They treat you like an animal.*



Photo: IRC/Frank Ishman

## Oasis' Story

When her parents gave their daughter a name that means “a place of refuge” they hardly imagined they would soon be seeking that very thing, running from the persecution they faced in their native Cuba for their political and religious beliefs.

At nine, Oasis fled with them to Spain, eventually settled in Miami and became a caseworker for the IRC, where she’s since devoted her life to helping others like herself find their way on what she calls the refugee’s “flight of freedom.” Now 36, Oasis can speak proudly about that journey, through both painful memories and the joy of finding that now she no longer has to whisper her words.



To learn more about refugees' journeys or to make a donation, please visit [FromHarmToHome.org](http://FromHarmToHome.org)

## IRC: Preserving Human Rights and Dignity

People fleeing war and persecution need water, food, shelter and medical care. But they also need security and safeguards of their rights and dignity.

IRC does not intervene in a crisis without a commitment to stay as long as we are needed, and provide long-term solutions. From the moment the IRC hits the ground, throughout the span of our work, we strive to restore the rights and dignity of the individuals we assist. In communities around the world, we work with local authorities to ensure that refugees' rights and needs are met.

Alongside our doctors and water and sanitation experts, we deploy specialists who can coordinate an effective response to violence against displaced women. And we counsel local officials on human rights issues and support local human

rights groups by training police officers and human rights monitors who can interview victims of violence and hopefully seek some sort of remedy through local legal systems.

In the U.S., IRC caseworkers and attorneys help refugees to understand their legal rights, determine their eligibility and ensure they meet the requirements for US citizenship. We then help them to complete and file application forms, effectively work with government immigration services and prepare for their citizenship interviews.

Protection of refugees means both their physical safety and well-being and the guarantee of their legal and human rights. A humanitarian response must fully address people's humanity.