

# Los Angeles: Community organizes self-defense against ICE raids

written by John Parker  
July 22, 2019



SLL photo: Scott Scheffer

## *Los Angeles*

On Saturday morning, July 13, activists heeded the call of Unión del Barrio (UdB) and gathered at a community center in Los Angeles to anxiously hear plans on community self-defense strategies against raids by U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE).

The community meeting focused on the creation of “Comités de Resistencia/Community Self-Defense Committees” against ICE raids. It came on the same weekend that Donald Trump had threatened to carry out deportation raids targeting families in 10 major U.S. cities.

ICE and police terrorize Latinx residents on this side of the border, egged on by the white-supremacist Trump administration, while children continue to die in Trump’s inhuman detention centers.

Like many who are frustrated by the lack of real action by politicians to stop the racist, genocidal treatment of migrants at the border and in detention centers, UdB believes it is up to the people themselves to change the situation.

Ron Gochez, one of the presenters at the community meeting, said: “Protests and marches are important, but they are not enough. We must organize ourselves and be ready to defend our people.”

At the meeting, organizers discussed how to create “Comités” in schools, churches, apartment buildings or anywhere necessary. The goal is to set up self-defense committees in different areas around the city of Los Angeles.

Some 70 people participated in the first meeting, and a second weekly meeting on July 20 was also well attended. The initiative by UdB has so far received a good amount of mainstream media attention. Six major media outlets attended a press conference held in South Central Los Angeles a few days prior to the meeting.

Members of Partido de Socialismo Unido/Socialist Unity Party were invited to speak at this press conference and have joined the weekly meetings, hoping to build and support this most important effort in Los Angeles.

Another of the attendees at the press conference was a member from the San Diego chapter of UdB, where they are using cars with decals attached to the doors identifying them as people's patrol cars to protect community members from ICE.

A Facebook page announcing future meetings states: "We call on the community to join the resistance against Trump, the migra, the police or anyone else who is threatening our community!"

It is no accident that this organization is leading the battle here in Los Angeles. Unión del Barrio is a community organization dedicated to the liberation of the people of Latin America against U.S. imperialism and works toward the empowerment of local Latinx communities, while also helping to build Black and Brown unity.

This type of response that empowers people to not rely on politicians or allow fear of the police and ICE to stifle activism will surely encourage similar strategies and militancy around the country, while building broader solidarity with migrants and all of those threatened by ICE and the police.

