

URGENT ACTION

ARMED MEN THREATEN MIGRANTS IN MEXICO

Two migrants were threatened by armed men outside a migrants' shelter in Lechería, Mexico State. The lives of migrants, staff and volunteers at the shelter are at risk.

On 3 May, two migrants, a man and a woman, were outside San Juan Diego migrants' shelter in Lechería, in Mexico state, waiting to use the public telephone, when two men in civilian clothing pulled up in a pick-up truck. According to eyewitnesses, the men in the car showed police identification to the migrants. One of the men then pointed a gun at the migrant, asking him personal questions and saying that if he did not get in the vehicle, he would shoot him. The man ran into the shelter and called for the woman to follow him. The armed men drove towards the door of the shelter and then turned around. A volunteer at the shelter was able to come out and write down the license plate number of the vehicle.

One of the men in the car shouted to his accomplice to kidnap the woman, who ran across the street into a shop to hide. The men threatened her as they drove away, saying that they would come back to get her. The police that are tasked with providing protection to the shelter were not present at the time of the attack.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to provide effective protection to staff, volunteers and migrants at the San Juan Diego shelter in Lechería, in strict accordance with their wishes;
- Urging for a full and impartial investigation into the attack on the migrants and for those responsible to be held to account;
- Urging the authorities to support the work of the migrants' shelter, including through taking steps to tackle discrimination against migrants, and through ensuring that migrants that pass through Lechería can be provided with secure shelter.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JUNE 2012 TO:

Minister of Interior

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez
Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P.06600, MÉXICO
Fax: (+52) 55 5093 3414 (keep trying)
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

**Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimado
Señor Secretario**

Governor of Mexico state

Eruviel Avila Villegas
Lerdo Poniente Numero 300,
Primer Piso, Puerta 216,
Palacio Del Poder Ejecutivo,
Colonia Centro, CP 50000
Toluca, Estado de México, México
Fax: (+52) 722 276 0046
Email: cnm@gem.gob.mx

**Salutation: Dear Governor/Estimado
Gobernador**

And copies to:

Albergue San Juan Diego

Cerrada de la Cruz # 15
Esquina con Av. 11 de Julio y Vías del
ferrocarril
Col. Lecheria
CP 54680, Tultitlán
Estado de Mexico
México

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fourth update of UA 16/11. Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/088/2011/en>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

ARMED MEN THREATEN MIGRANTS IN MEXICO

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Staff, volunteers and migrants at the San Juan Diego migrants' shelter in Lechería, Mexico state have been subject to a pattern of abuses and attacks. Parts of the local population have violently protested against the existence of the migrants' shelter, and these protests are once again flaring up. The shelter has been granted precautionary measures by the National Commission for Human Rights, but these are not sufficient to guarantee the protection of the staff, volunteers and migrants at the shelter.

On 30 January 2011, Guadalupe Calzada, who ran the shelter at the time, was informed of a plan to burn the shelter down, murder Guatemalan migrants and kill her "like a dog" ("*como un perro*") within three days. The threat is believed to originate from people-smuggler gangs operating in the area who consider the shelter a threat to their criminal activities. The authorities were informed of this threat and requested protection.

On 13 August 2011, a group of over 30 people from the local community of Lechería assembled in front of the migrants' shelter to call for its closure. The community threatened to burn down the shelter if it was not closed down and to storm in and remove the migrants themselves.

On 11 December 2011, approximately 80 residents of the local community of Lechería, came together to demand the closure of the shelter. They were protesting because they claim that the migrants' shelter attracts trouble to their neighbourhood, such as drugs and people traffickers. Several of the residents also dismantled four makeshift huts made by migrants by the side of the train tracks, meters away from the migrants' shelter, and set fire to some of the migrants' belongings. According to staff working at the shelter, several of the protesters swore at them and tried to hit them.

Hundreds of thousands of irregular migrants (those without official travel documents) attempt to travel through Mexico from Central and South America every year to reach the USA. Many are detained by the Mexican migration authorities and returned to their countries of origin. Amnesty International recently visited Mexico to investigate reports of human rights violations against these people. During the visit, Amnesty International found that many had been kidnapped by gangs, sometimes with the complicity of local officials. Impunity for abuses against migrants, who are extremely vulnerable, has allowed these abuses to increase, despite government commitments to ensure respect of migrants' rights.

Amnesty International recently launched an action designed to visibilise the plight of migrants travelling through Mexico and to provide much needed assistance to migrants travelling across the country, you can take action here; <http://sendsocks.org/>

Name: Staff, volunteers and migrants at the San Juan Diego migrants' shelter
Gender m/f: Both

Further information on UA: 16/11 Index: AMR 41/032/2012 Issue Date: 8 May 2012