

URGENT ACTION

STAFF AT MIGRANTS SHELTER AT RISK AFTER ATTACK

Father José Guadalupe Valdés, who runs the migrants' shelter, Albergue Frontera Digna, in Piedras Negras, Coahuila state, on Mexico's northern border, and the volunteers and migrants at the shelter, are at risk after a member of staff was attacked and threatened on 9 May.

A member of staff at the Frontera Digna migrants' shelter, was attacked on his way to the local bus station in Piedras Negras on 9 May. The member of staff was accompanying a migrant to the bus station. On his way out of the bus station he was stopped by a man who asked him for a lighter. Moments later, several men grabbed him and forced him into a van and put a bag over his head. One of the men put a gun to his head and told him "have you played Russian roulette, if you get the bullet you get fucked" ("has jugado la ruleta rusa? si te toca el tiro ya te tocó la chingada"). The trigger was pulled but it was an empty chamber. The men then let him go telling him that this had happened because he would not collaborate with them. The member of staff has now left the shelter, fearing for his life.

Staff at the shelter have received threatening phone calls from unknown men on previous occasions. One week before this incident, several attempts were made to force open the front door of the building. The aggressors are believed to be criminal gang members who are part of a kidnapping ring.

The shelter and staff members have protection measures from the National Human Rights Commission and several criminal complaints have been filed with the authorities in response to aggression and intimidation against migrants and staff at the shelter on previous occasions. Amnesty International is concerned that unless more decisive action is taken to improve protection, the threats and attacks against migrants in Piedras Negras and staff running the shelter may escalate further.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Father José Guadalupe Valdés, volunteers and migrants at the shelter in Piedras Negras after the attack and threat;
- Calling for immediate and strengthened protection measures to be implemented in accordance with the wishes of Father José Guadalupe Valdés and others at risk;
- Calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threat and for those responsible to be held to account;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JUNE 2011 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
 Secretario, Sec. de Gobernación
 Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez,
 Delegación Cuauhtémoc,
 México D.F., C.P. 06600, MÉXICO
 Fax: +52 55 30032900 ext. 32356
 Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

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

Governor of Coahuila

Jorge Torres López
 Gobernador del Estado de Coahuila
 Palacio de Gobierno, 1er. Piso Juárez e
 Hidalgo s/n, Saltillo, C.P. 25000
 Coahuila, MÉXICO
 Fax: +52 844 438 0728 (and say: me
 puede dar tono de fax por favor)
 Email: s.particular@coahuila.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Governor

Municipal President of Piedras Negras

Lic. Oscar Fernando Lopez Elizondo
 Monterrey y Av.16 de Septiembre S/N
 Col. Las Fuentes
 C.P 26010
 Coahuila, MÉXICO
 Fax: +52 878 782 6666 ext. 1136

Salutation: Dear President

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Every year, thousands of undocumented migrants from Central America travel across Mexico in order to reach the US border. Many of them suffer beatings, kidnapping, rape and even murder. In most of the cases the attacks are carried out by criminal gangs, but officials are known to have been complicit or acquiescent in many of the attacks. By and large, the authorities fail to investigate attacks against migrants and to bring those responsible to justice.

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