

URGENT ACTION

POLICE RAID HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE, NO WARRANT

Federal Police officers raided a human rights organization's office in the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua on 5 June, without a warrant. The staff of the organization are in danger.

Five Federal Police vehicles arrived at the premises of the *Centro de Derechos Humanos Paso del Norte* (Human Rights Centre Paso del Norte) in Ciudad Juárez on 5 June, at around 8pm. Police officers broke the front door's locks with sledgehammers to get into the offices, where they searched through papers and files all related to legal matters and left the premises in chaos. About 25 armed and uniformed police officers were involved in the raid, which was carried out without a judicial warrant or any explanation from the authorities.

The Human Rights Centre Paso del Norte works with individual victims of human rights violations in Ciudad Juárez, providing support and advice. Along with other local human rights organizations it has been critical of high levels of criminal violence in the city, impunity and the failure of the authorities to investigate human rights violations committed by military and police forces. The organization is also supporting and organizing the visit of a mass demonstration against violence, impunity and lack of access to justice, the Peace with Justice and Dignity convoy - which is travelling to Ciudad Juárez on 10 June 2011. There is concern that that the police raid was in response to these legitimate human rights activities and is intended to intimidate and silence those working with the human rights centre.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of workers with the Human Rights Centre Paso del Norte and ensure no further illegal raids or other acts of intimidation are carried out against them by police or security forces;
- Calling on them to order a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the illegal raid on the offices of Human Rights Centre Paso del Norte on 5 June and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to provide a full explanation for the raid and to publicly recognise the legitimate human rights work of the human rights organization and the right to defend human rights without fear of reprisals.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 JULY 2011 TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

Marisela Morales Ibañez
Procuradora General de Justicia de la República
Av. Paseo de la reforma 211 – 213
Col. Cuahtemoc, Del. Cuahtemoc,
Mexico D.F., Mexico

Fax: +52 555 346 0908 (keep trying)

Email: mmoralesi@pgr.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Secretary of Public Safety

Ing. Genaro García Luna
Secretaría de Seguridad Pública
Constituyentes n° 947
Edif. "B" planta alta
Col. Belén de las Flores
Del. Álvaro, Obregón
Mexico D.F., C.P. 01110
Mexico

Fax: +52 55 1103 6189

Email: genaro.garcia@ssp.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Secretary

And copies to:

Chihuahua State Governor

Lic. César Eduardo Duarte Jaquez
Gobernación del Estado de Chihuahua
C. Aldama No. 901 Palacio de Gobierno
1er Piso
Col. Centro
Chihuahua, Chihuahua
Mexico

Fax: +52 614 429 3464

Email:

despachodelejecutivo@hotmail.com

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

Since 2007, violence linked to organized crime has spiralled in Mexico. The government attributes more than 34,000 killings during this period to organized crime. In 2010 there were more than 3,000 killings in Ciudad Juárez, one of the worst affected cities. President Calderón's administration has attempted to combat the drug cartels by deploying thousands of federal police and over 50,000 military personnel in the worst affected areas, particularly Ciudad Juárez, as well as restructuring state and municipal police forces.

In recent months the Federal Police have been responsible for maintaining security in Ciudad Juárez. Furthermore, there are extremely high levels of violent crime and impunity in Ciudad Juárez, including high levels of threats on human rights defenders and organizations. The authorities have consistently failed to take effective action to combat these threats and improve the safety of the human rights workers.

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