

URGENT ACTION

POLICE THREATEN STAFF AT MIGRANTS' SHELTER

Migrant Rights Defenders have been insulted and intimidated by federal police officers at Tijuana Migrants' Shelter, in the state of Baja California, northern Mexico.

On 26 July, approximately thirty heavily armed federal police officers arrived at the Tijuana Migrants' Shelter asking to enter the premises. They said that they were searching for someone who had committed a murder and believed he could be staying at the shelter.

According to staff at the shelter, when the director of the shelter **Padre Luiz Kendzierski** said that they could not enter the shelter without a search warrant, the police officers began to insult him. They shouted that he was a paedophile on several occasions and accused him of profiting from the migrants. They also threatened and insulted **Gabriela Morales**, a lawyer supporting migrants at the shelter, who was standing outside of the shelter at the time. They reportedly told her "people who defend human rights are protecting criminals" ("las personas que defienden derechos humanos protegen a los criminales").

As a result of the federal police officers' insults and intimidating behaviour, the shelter staff contacted the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH). According to staff at the shelter, once a member of staff from the CNDH arrived at the shelter, the police officers' behaviour improved, so the shelter staff allowed one police officer to enter the shelter unarmed. There was no sign of the man they were looking for at the shelter and the police officers left the shelter soon after.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to publically recognise the important and legitimate work of human rights defenders providing humanitarian aid in migrants' shelters across Mexico and to make a public apology to members of staff working at the Tijuana Migrants' Shelter for the insults they suffered on 26 July;
- Calling on the authorities to implement an effective protection programme for all human rights defenders at risk in consultation with civil society as stipulated in the presidential agreement signed on 6 July 2011;
- Reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
 Secretario de Gobernación
 Abraham González No.48
 Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc
 México, D.F, C. P. 06600
 México
 Fax: +52 55 50933414 (a voice will ask
 for the extension: dial 32356)

Salutation: Dear Minister

Governor of Baja California

Mtro. Jose Guadalupe Osuna Millán
 Gobernador de Baja California
 Edificio del Poder Ejecutivo 3er Piso
 Calzada Independencia 994
 Centro Cívico, Mexicali
 BC, CP 21000
 Fax: +52 686 558 1090 (say: me da tono
 de fax por favor)
 Email: jgosuna@baja.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Casa del Migrante Tijuana
 Calle Galileo 239, Col. Postal
 Tijuana, B.C
 CP 22350
 Fax: +52 664 682 6358
 Email: sadelmig@yahoo.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

Defending human rights can be a dangerous job in Mexico. Scores of activists have suffered death threats, intimidation, and harassment in the last few years. For several years Mexican human rights defenders have demanded that the federal authorities adopt and implement an effective and comprehensive protection programme. On 6 July 2011 President Calderón signed an agreement which will act as the basis for the development of a human rights defenders protection programme.

Human rights defenders, particularly local priests and lay workers who run a network of migrants' shelters providing humanitarian aid, are the backbone of the support extended to migrants. Defenders also play a crucial role in registering abuses by agents of the state and by private individuals or groups and in encouraging them to seek justice. Those who stand up for irregular migrants are themselves often targeted for attack. Some have received death threats and in some cases shelters have been physically attacked. Others have been subjected to smear campaigns and threats of false charges of people smuggling.

Amnesty International recently made a film documenting the plight of Central American migrant travelling through Mexico and those who defend them. You can watch it and take action here: www.youtube.com/invisiblesfilms

Name: Padre Luiz Kendzierski and Gabriela Morales and other staff at the Tijuana Migrants' Shelter;

Gender m/f: Padre Luiz Kendzierski is male; Gabriela Morales is female; and there are staff members of both genders working at the shelter.

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