

URGENT ACTION

MASS DEPORTATIONS MUST STOP

Since August, authorities in Mexico have been conducting mass detentions and deportations of migrants and asylum seekers without taking measures to ensure that these individuals are not being returned to locations where their lives or physical integrity might be at risk. Such deportations potentially endanger the lives of thousands. Excessive use of force against migrants and asylum seekers has also been reported. Take action urgently to protect their rights.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Andrés Manuel López Obrador

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Dear President López Obrador,

I am writing to express my alarm over the serious risks to the lives and safety of thousands of asylum seekers and migrants from countries such as Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador as a result of recent actions by Mexican authorities. According to the information available, authorities from the National Migration Institute (INM) and National Guard (GN) are conducting mass detentions, expulsions, and deportations without carrying out prior individualized risk assessments or enabling people in need to access protection.

I am also aware of recent incidents in which authorities have persecuted and violently detained migrants and asylum seekers, using unnecessary force against them. According to available information, children are also being held in migratory detention centers in the South of the country, against Mexican law and international standards surrounding the best interests of the child.

I call upon you to uphold the rights of migrants and asylum seekers by putting an end to mass deportations without due process, by ensuring that children are never detained in migratory detention, and by ensuring that migrants and asylum seekers are treated with respect and dignity, not unnecessary or excessive force.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 9th and 10th August 2021, organizations from the Collective for Observation and Monitoring of Human Rights in the Mexican Southeast (Colectivo de Observación y Monitoreo de Derechos Humanos en el Sureste Mexicano) reported the arrival of flights from Texas, United States into Tapachula, Chiapas. These flights were reportedly carrying migrants and asylum seekers deported from the United States under Title 42, a measure implemented by the US in response to COVID-19, under which people crossing the Mexico-US land border may be expelled. According to the account of local organizations, authorities from the National Institute of Migration (INM) and the National Guard (GN) took those arriving on deportation flights to the Talismán border with Guatemala and abandoned them, without conducting administrative processing or individualized risk assessments. Processing also reportedly did not place on the Guatemala side of the border and no orientation or guidance was provided. According to local organizations, such incidents have occurred throughout the months of August and September and have affected predominately people from Haiti, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. This practice is reportedly also taking place at the Villahermosa airport, in the southern State of Tabasco, with migrants and asylum seekers arriving on flights being immediately loaded onto buses by authorities and sent to Honduras without individualized risk assessments or administrative processing.

Local organizations also report that in addition to this treatment being experienced by those deported from the United States, people from Haiti and Central America detained in the interior of Mexico have also been subject to this practice. Local organizations report that even those with regular status in Mexico, such as those with refugee status or official asylum applications have also been subject to expedited deportation – a serious violation of their rights. Amnesty International has previously [documented](#) this practice. On 29 September, Mexican migration authorities also reported returning people from Haiti to their country of origin by plane, supposedly on a voluntary basis.

Between 28 August and 5 September, thousands of migrants and asylum seekers, primarily from Haiti, but also from other countries in the region, organized caravans to leave the city of Tapachula, Chiapas following days of protests. The protests related to the pace of asylum application processing and the lack of opportunities and decent living conditions in the city. Authorities from INM, GN and the military repressed the caravan, using excessive force against those participating. According to local organizations, authorities beat migrants and asylum seekers, and separated children from their families. Journalists were also reportedly injured. Authorities have also engaged in the persecution of Haitian migrants in the Northern border state of Coahuila, where thousands of people from Haiti have been waiting to cross into the US. Media reports suggest that police, INM and national guard officials on 21 and 22 September conducted raids in hotels and on the streets in order to detain people from Haiti possibly in need of international protection.

In addition to mass, unlawful detentions and expulsions, local organizations also report poor detention conditions in migratory detention centers located at Mexico's southern border. Overcrowding has been reported at the Cupape 1, Cupape 2 (La Mosca), and Siglo XXI centers in Chiapas. Infants, children and adolescents are also reportedly being held at these facilities despite Mexican law and international standards expressly prohibiting this due to concerns regarding the best interests of the child. Amnesty International and other organizations recently [called](#) upon the Mexican government to stop the detention and deportation of migrants and asylum seekers due to the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In recent years, the number of people seeking asylum in Mexico has soared. Recent data released in 2021 by the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) show that people fleeing Honduras make up the greatest portion of those seeking asylum in Mexico this year, followed by people from Haiti, Cuba and El Salvador. Amnesty International has documented that attacks, threats, persecution, impunity, and high levels of poverty and inequality are the main factors leading to forced migration from Central American countries to Mexico. With respect to Haiti, protests and widespread violence have been ongoing since at least 2019, as previously [documented](#) by Amnesty International. Amidst the chaos surrounding the killing of President Jovenel Moïse in early July, violent crime, and the human rights crisis afflicting the country, journalists and human rights defenders have increasingly come under attack. The Haitian government has been accused of complicity in large-scale attacks by gangs targeting impoverished neighbourhoods. In a [report](#) earlier this year, the UN highlighted the increase in human rights violations. Amnesty International is also [calling](#) upon the US government to stop deportations and human rights violations against Haitians in the United States.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: SPANISH

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [December 2021]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: [asylum seekers] (them)