

URGENT ACTION

39 DEAD IN MIGRANT'S DETENTION CENTRE FIRE

A group of 39 people died in a fire on 28 March in a migrant's detention centre in Ciudad Juárez, while 28 were hospitalized. There are allegations that the centre's staff left the victims locked up after the fire started. We call on the President Andrés López Obrador to immediately change course and protect migrant's and refugees' rights.

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

*Presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador
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Dear Mr. President López Obrador,

The fire in the migrant detention centre in Ciudad Juárez last 28 March caused the death of at least 39 migrants and the hospitalization of other 28. The government you lead had the obligation to prevent this tragedy and to act diligently during the fire to avoid fatal consequences. There are serious allegations that migrants were left locked up after the flames expanded in the jails.

Instead of looking at the structural causes of this abhorrent situation, which are the application of inhumane policies towards the people seeking international protection transiting over your country, you have insisted on downplaying the seriousness of the events and blamed the migrants for their death.

We urge you to immediately change course and ensure that a new set of policies and practices fully guarantee migrants' and refugees' human rights in Mexico, including putting a stop on the militarization of migration and the generalized detention of migrants. We also call on you to coordinate with all relevant authorities to make sure that the victims of this tragedy are not further stigmatized, that there is a promptly, comprehensive and transparent investigation for the human right violations that took place, to guarantee the right to health of the survivors hospitalized, to grant them with migration regularization if they so wish, to guarantee a full reparation for the victims and their families, and finally, identify and ensure the repatriation of the bodies of the deceased in a dignified way and without any charge.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The people held at the migrant's detention centre were coming from 5 different countries: Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela. Amnesty International had documented and denounced the grave human rights situation on all these countries, which are the main factor driving people to leave their countries seeking for international protection, frequently passing through dangerous routes and been subjected to abuses from migration authorities and criminal groups.

The deaths and injuries that took place on 28 March as a consequence of the fire of Ciudad Juárez migrant's detention centre took place in a context in which people have been forced to seek international protection, as they are at risk of losing their lives or suffering other human rights violations, both in their countries of origin and in those of transit and destination. Faced with this situation, the countries in the region, led by the United States of America, have established shared migration policies that are increasingly inhumane, making it almost impossible to access the right to seek asylum, and forcing people to seek more dangerous routes that place them in even more vulnerable situations.

As part of this strategy to curb migration in collaboration with the United States of America and Canada, Mexican authorities have tasked the National Guard with immigration enforcement and militarized the nation's borders. In addition, they have systematically used immigration detention. In 2022 alone, immigration authorities detained at least 318,660 people in migrant detention centres and expelled more than 106,000, including children and adolescents.

These detentions are carried out without complying with the standards of exceptionality, proportionality, necessity and appropriateness of detention, nor with the highest standards regarding dignified detention conditions, including the prohibition of overcrowding and the availability of sufficient food and water. The First Chamber of Mexico's Supreme Court of Justice (SCJN) established on 15 March 2023 that people should not be held in migrant detention centres for more than 36 hours, after which they should be released from detention.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish. You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 11 May 2023. Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME: Migrants death at detention centre in Ciudad Juárez (they, them)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: N/A