

URGENT ACTION

HAITIAN MIGRANTS AT RISK IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Twenty-five male Haitian migrants have been collectively expelled from the Dominican Republic after being rounded up at a meeting on labour rights organized by a migrants' association. Other Haitian migrants are at risk of being arbitrarily expelled from the Dominican Republic.

On 4 October, soldiers entered a house in the northern town of Montecristi, where a training session on labour rights for migrant workers was being conducted by Solidarity Association of Migrant Workers in the Northwest Region (Asociación Solidaria de Obreros Migrantes de la Línea Noroeste, ASOMILIN). The soldiers detained 25 Haitian nationals present at the meeting, leaving behind two men, and an unknown number of women and children. The 25 detained men were transferred to a military base in Montecristi. The following morning they were driven to the border town of Dajabon, where they were held for few hours until they were driven across the border to Haiti.

According to ASOMILIN, the men did not have the opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention or appeal against the decision to send them back to Haiti. The organization says that none of the men was permitted to telephone a lawyer, or to contact relatives to tell them what was happening. In addition, the soldiers did not allow the men to collect their belongings or wages owed for their work.

Local sources suggest that these expulsions were instigated by local landowners who employ migrant workers, in an attempt to stop the workers from exercising their rights to freedom of association and assembly.

Migrant workers are entitled to protection against arbitrary and collective expulsion from a country. This right is guaranteed in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 22 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), to which the Dominican Republic is a state party. However, Amnesty International has documented numerous such cases in recent years.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern at the rounding up and arbitrary expulsion of 25 Haitian migrants on 4-5 October;
- Urging the authorities to stop collective expulsions of migrant workers;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that all those facing removal from the Dominican Republic have their cases individually examined in a fair and transparent procedure, where they can challenge the authorities' decisions and have their cases reviewed;
- Urging the Dominican Republic to fulfil its obligations under the ACHR and the ICCPR, both of which prohibit the collective expulsion of foreign nationals.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 NOVEMBER 2009 TO:

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Sr. Carlos Morales Troncoso
 Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores
 Avda. Independencia No.752
 Santo Domingo, República Dominicana
 Fax: +1 809 985 7551
 Salutation: **Dear Secretary of State**

Director of Immigration

Almirante M.de G. Sigfrido Pared Pérez
 Dirección General de Migración
 Avenida 30 de Mayo, Esquina Héroes de Luperon,
 Santo Domingo, República Dominicana
 Fax: +1 809 534 7118
 Email: despacho.gral@verizon.net.do
 Salutation: **Dear Director**

And copies to:

Migrant Workers' Association

ASOMILIN
 c/o Solidaridad Fronteriza
 c/Manuel Roca n.13, Esq. P.Santa Anna
 Dajabón, República Dominicana
Fax: +1 809 579 7012
Email: solidaridadfronteriza@sjrdom.org

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

Amnesty International has previously called on the Dominican authorities to stop collective expulsions of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic. According to local human rights organizations, more than 6,000 Haitians were expelled in the first six months of 2008. Many of these expulsions were arbitrary and did not comply with international human rights standards.

This practice of collective expulsions means that Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic live in the continual fear of being expelled, without an effective opportunity to challenge the decision to do so. The number of Haitians currently living in the Dominican Republic is estimated at somewhere between 500,000 and 1,000,000.

Collective expulsions contravene the Protocol of understanding on the mechanisms of repatriation agreed by the Dominican and Haitian governments in December 1999. In signing the Protocol, the Dominican Republic undertook to improve its deportation mechanisms and made a number of specific commitments including to avoid separating nuclear families during the process of repatriation and to allow those being deported to collect their belongings and keep their identity documents.

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