

URGENT ACTION

MEXICAN MIGRANTS RIGHTS DEFENDER ATTACKED

Migrant rights defender Ignacio Muñiz Zamora has been attacked, robbed and threatened by armed men in Tamaulipas state in northern Mexico. He and his colleagues at the Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini Migrants Rights Centre are at risk of further attacks.

On 22 March, **Ignacio Muñiz Zamora**, a legal adviser to migrants at the Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini Migrants Rights Centre (Centro de Derechos Humanos Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini), in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas state, was approached by two unidentified armed men. The two men tried to force Ignacio Muñiz Zamora into their vehicle. During this struggle one of the men threatened him saying “you shouldn’t mess with us, stop what you are doing” (“no debes de meterte con nosotros y deja de hacer lo que estas haciendo”). The men then pointed a gun at Ignacio Muñiz Zamora, stole two laptop computers and a radio that he was carrying with him and drove off. A complaint has been filed with the authorities.

Ignacio Muñiz Zamora has received threats from unidentified men on previous occasions. In October 2010, while he was waiting for public transport to go to work, two unidentified men approached him in a car and interrogated him on where he worked. When he did not respond, the men told him they knew exactly where he worked and were watching him as well as the rest of the staff at his workplace. The men told him that he should stop getting in the way of their work because he was making life difficult for them.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that Ignacio Muñiz Zamora and other members of staff at the Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini Migrants Rights Centre remain at risk. Ignacio Muñiz Zamora and several of his colleagues asked for protection measures from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights in late 2010 but these have not yet been granted.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of Ignacio Muñiz Zamora and other members of staff at the Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini Migrants Rights Centre;
- Calling for immediate protection measures to be implemented in accordance with the wishes of Ignacio Muñiz Zamora and other staff at risk at Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini Migrants Rights Centre so that they can continue their work to defend the rights of migrants;
- Calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the attack and robbery against Ignacio Muñiz Zamora.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 MAY 2011 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
Secretario, Sec. de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez,
Delegación Cuauhtémoc,
México D.F., C.P. 06600, MÉXICO
Fax: +52 55 30032900 ext. 32356
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

**Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimado
Señor Secretario**

Governor of Tamaulipas state

Ing. Egidio Torre Cantu
Gobernador del Estado de Tamaulipas
15 y 16 Juárez – Palacio de Gobierno,
3 piso Cd. Victoria
Tamaulipas, Mexico CP 87000
Fax: +52 834 318 8701 (say “me da
tono de fax por favor)
Email: egidio.torre@tamaulipas.gob.mx

**Salutation: Dear Governor/
Estimado Gobernador**

And copies to:

Centro de Derechos Humanos del
Migrante
Email: coordinacion@cdhmcj.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hundreds of thousands of irregular migrants (those without official travel documents) attempt to travel through Mexico from Central and South America every year to reach the USA. Many are detained by the Mexican migration authorities and returned to their countries of origin. Amnesty International visited Mexico to investigate reports of human rights violations against these people. During the visit, Amnesty International found that many had been kidnapped by gangs, sometimes with the complicity of local officials. Impunity for abuses against migrants, who are extremely vulnerable, has allowed these abuses to increase, despite government commitments to ensure respect of migrants' rights.

A network of non governmental migrants shelters provide humanitarian assistance to desperate migrants in different parts of Mexico. The human rights defenders who work in shelters providing assistance to migrants have frequently been subject to threats, intimidation and attack by criminal gangs often operating with the complicity of local authorities.

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