

# URGENT ACTION

## FURTHER FEARS FOR SHELTER STAFF AND MIGRANTS

**Staff, volunteers and migrants at the San Juan Diego migrants' shelter in Lecheria, Mexico state, are at risk of attack after local community members held a protest outside the shelter and demanded its closure. This follows a pattern of intimidation and harassment against the shelter.**

Approximately eighty residents of the local community of Lecheria, Mexico state, came together on 11 December to demand the closure of San Juan Diego migrants' shelter. They were protesting because they claim that the migrants' shelter attracts trouble to their neighbourhood, such as drugs and people traffickers. The local community members closed down the main road leading to the shelter for over an hour. Several of the residents also dismantled four makeshift huts made by migrants by the side of the train tracks, meters away from the migrants' shelter, and set fire to some of the migrants' belongings. According to staff working at the shelter, several of the protesters swore at them and tried to hit them.

On 13 August, a group of over 30 people from the local community of Lecheria assembled in front of the San Juan Diego migrants' shelter to call for its closure. The community threatened to burn down the shelter if it was not closed down and to storm in and remove the migrants themselves. They chanted "get rid of the migrants' shelter" ("*fuera la casa de migrante*"). The community remained outside the shelter for six hours. The authorities have failed to provide adequate protection or provide the local community with information about the work the shelter carries out to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants.

### Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Express concern for the safety of staff, volunteers and migrants at the San Juan Diego shelter in Lecheria after the protest;
- Call for immediate protection measures to be implemented in accordance with the wishes of staff and others at risk at the shelter;
- Call for the authorities to increase security in Lecheria to ensure the safety of both the residents of Lecheria and the migrants staying at the shelter.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JANUARY 2012 TO:

#### Minister of the Interior

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero  
Secretaría de Gobernación  
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez  
Delegación Cuauhtémoc  
México D.F., C.P.06600, MÉXICO  
Fax: (+52) 55 5093 3414  
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

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

#### Governor of Mexico state

Eruviel Avila Villegas  
Lerdo Poniente Numero 300,  
Primer Piso, Puerta 216,  
Palacio Del Poder Ejecutivo,  
Colonia Centro, CP 50000  
Toluca, Estado de México, México  
Fax: (+52) 722 2760046  
Email: cnm@gem.gob.mx

**Salutation: Dear Governor/Estimado  
Gobernador**

#### **And copies to:**

Albergue San Juan Diego  
Cerrada de la Cruz # 15  
Esquina con Av. 11 de Julio y Vías del  
ferrocarril  
Col. Lecheria  
CP 54680, Tultitlán  
Estado de Mexico  
México

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 16/11. Further information:

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/064/2011/en>

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## FURTHER FEARS FOR SHELTER STAFF AND MIGRANTS

### 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 recently 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.

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. 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, you can watch it and take action here: [www.youtube.com/invisiblesfilms](http://www.youtube.com/invisiblesfilms)

Name: Staff and migrants at the San Juan Diego migrants' shelter  
Gender m/f: Both m and f

Further information on UA: 16/11 Index: AMR 41/088/2011 Issue Date: 13 December 2011