

Via Fax: 052 55 50933414 (extension: 32356) Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora Minister of the Interior of Mexico	Via Fax: 052 993 314 2612 Q.F.B. Andrés Granier Melo Governor of Tabasco, Mexico
--	---

September 23, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of **Fray Tomás González**, director of La 72 migrants' shelter and President of the Usumacinta Human Rights Centre (CDHU) in Tenosique, Tabasco State, and for **Ruben Figueroa**, migrants' rights activist. On September 17, when they were traveling with two migrants to Tenosique to buy clothes for migrants staying at the shelter, they were stopped by members of the military who demanded to search their pick-up truck. When they refused to cooperate because there was no legal justification for the search, two state police vans arrived and surrounded the truck. One state police officer slapped Ruben Figueroa on the face.

Fray Tomás González took photos of an unidentified man in civilian clothes who ordered the military officers to search the truck and force the four occupants to get out. When a staff member from the National Human Rights Commission called Fray Tomás González on his mobile phone asking to speak to the unidentified man, the man refused, saying that human rights didn't count for anything. Neither the state police nor members of the military who witnessed the man's threats took action. When three municipal police vans and twenty heavily armed soldiers wearing balaclavas arrived, Fray Tomás González, Ruben Figueroa, and the two migrants continued to refuse to leave the truck. After four hours, the military and police left the scene when members of the National Human Rights Commission staff arrived.

On September 9, Fray Tomás González received a threatening telephone call at his local parish in Tenosique. The caller told him "something is going to happen to you" and hung up. Staff at CDHU and the migrants' shelter have come under increasing pressure in recent months after municipal and migration officials were publicly denounced for alleged human rights violations (cf our letter of Aug 2, 2011). Amnesty International has expressed concern that previous protection measures agreed to by the authorities, including police patrols near the shelter, have not been implemented.

We **strongly urge** that you

- conduct a full and impartial investigation into the threats and intimidation against Fray Tomás González and Ruben Figueroa and bring those responsible to justice;
- immediately implement protection measures, including police patrols, in strict accordance with the wishes of those at risk.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kay Sommers, Coordinator

cc: Lic. Raúl Gustavo Gutiérrez Cortés, Municipal President of Tenosique ~ via fax: 052 934 3420036
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
John Feeley, Carge d'Affaires, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011 52 56 5080 2834
Greg Sprow, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3992
José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Mexico member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA: 274/11Update/Mexico

The following people hereby urge that you take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: