

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414
Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong
 Minister of the Interior of Mexico

via fax: 011 52 844 411 8500
Rubén Moreira Valdez
 Governor of Coahuila State, Mexico

January 21, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply distressed about recent events at **Belén Migrant Shelter** in Saltillo, Coahuila State. On December 19, 2012, the window of a car belonging to **Pedro Pantoja Arreola**, a Catholic priest and director of the shelter, was smashed and a briefcase was stolen that contained confidential work documents. On December 27 the car of shelter coordinator **Javier Martínez Hernández** was broken into and another briefcase with confidential important documents was taken. Valuables were not taken in either case in spite of access and opportunity.

On December 30 a man called Pedro Pantoja Arreola's private phone in the church and threatened the entire team at the Posada Belen, stating "You will all be screwed." On January 1 an unidentified person called the offices of the shelter, saying that documents found with the name and telephone number of Javier Martínez Hernández could be picked up. When Javier Martínez Hernández arrived at the address provided, there was only an unidentified woman there who said she did not know of any documents. A formal complaint about all of these events has been filed at the Coahuila State Attorney General's Office.

Bélen Migrant Shelter provides shelter, clothes, food and safety advice to migrants traveling from Central America to the United States. In 2010, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights instructed the Mexican government to provide protective measures for Father Pedro Pantoja Arreola and his team at the shelter. As part of the measures provided by the state, a patrol car is stationed outside the shelter. However, workers at the shelter have raised concerns about the lack of training and capacity of officials charged with their protection and other failures to fully implement protection measures.

Because of our concern for the safety of persons at the Bélen Migrant Shelter we **strongly urge** that you

- provide effective protection to members of the Bélen Migrant Shelter according to their wishes;
- carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation regarding the thefts and telephone threat to members of the shelter;
- implement an effective protection program as stipulated in the precautionary measures granted by the Inter American Commission of Human Rights.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

Copies: Saltillo Migrants' House Shelter ~ via email
 Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
 Earl Anthony Wayne, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
 Greg Spro, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
 Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
 US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA/04/13_Mexico

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