

via email: egidio.torre@tamaulipas.gob.mx
Governor Egidio Torre Cantú
 Governor of Tamaulipas, Mexico

via fax 011+52 55 5093 3414
Minister Miguel Angel Osorio Chong
 Minister of the Interior of Mexico

April 12, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We urge you to take immediate action to remedy the intensifying human rights crisis faced by Central Americans and other migrants—children, women, and men—in Tamaulipas State, which borders Texas.

On March 18, three Mexican women (who had recently been deported from the United States) were abducted by a group of men from a public street while waiting outside a Western Union office in the border city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas. A fourth woman escaped and ran to a nearby bus terminal to report the kidnapping to police; the three women are still missing.

On March 19, a group of 40 Central American migrants were held captive by criminal gangs in the border city of Reynosa, Tamaulipas. After release, the victims were not provided any support or protection normally extended to victims of crime by Mexican authorities. Immediately after, 17 Guatemalan migrants sought refuge at Our Lady of Guadalupe migrant shelter operated by the Catholic Church in Reynosa. According to shelter staff, an additional 10 Central American migrants arrived to seek emergency shelter. Alarmingly, a group of armed men stopped the group outside the shelter and forced the migrants into three pickup trucks. Despite numerous reports of the abduction in Reynosa, no criminal investigation has been launched to track down the perpetrators of the crime or to rescue the abducted migrants.

In Mexico, migrants are systematically targeted by gangs for kidnapping, trafficking, rape, extortion, and murder. In 2011, the National Human Rights Commission reported that 10,000 migrants were abducted by gangs in a single six-month period. To date, migration law reforms to combat violent crimes against migrants have failed to curb these abuses, to decrease corruption of local authorities, or to protect vulnerable migrants.

We **strongly urge** that the authorities in Mexico take the following actions:

- Carry out an immediate, thorough, and impartial investigation into the whereabouts of migrants abducted outside the Our Lady of Guadalupe shelter in Reynosa and the three women in Matamoros;
- Provide effective protection of migrants released from captivity of criminal gangs or deported from the United States;
- Honor the obligations under Article 7 of the General Victims' Law by guaranteeing the physical and psychological well-being and safety of victims of crime, including migrants.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator

copies: Misión para Migrantes Y Refugiados: via email
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 US Senators Brown & Portman
 US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

UA 73/14_Mexico

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