

# URGENT ACTION

## staff and migrants at a shelter threatened

**On 7 December the Belén Migrants shelter (*Belén, Posada del Migrante*) in Saltillo, Coahuila state, was broken into. This follows a series of acts of intimidation which have escalated in the past months. The migrants staying at the shelter and the staff working there are in danger.**

The director of the shelter's laptop containing important information on the work of the shelter was stolen during the break in. No other valuables were removed.

On 26 November in the early hours of the morning, a jeep and a motorbike drove past the shelter at high speed. The driver of the motorbike then stopped in front of the shelter, got off his bike and took a gun out while inspecting the shelter from outside. Since the beginning of October 2010, staff at the shelter have noticed a black truck repeatedly driving past the shelter. The truck usually slows down when it approaches the shelter and lowers its windows, with the occupants of the truck speaking on a radio during their observation of the shelter.

On 12 November a volunteer working at the Belén Migrants shelter was told by a person who staff at the shelter believe to be a people-trafficker that "the staff should be careful when they go out because something could happen to them when they're out on the streets" ("el equipo de trabajo tuvieran cuidado cuando salieran porque algo les podía pasar cuando salieran a la calle").

Staff and migrants at the shelter are in such danger that Mexico's National Human Rights Commission and the Inter-American Human Rights Commission have called on the authorities to protect them. However, protection measures have not been fully implemented, and those at the shelter remain at risk. The threats and attacks against migrants in Saltillo and staff running the shelter may escalate further.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:**

- ✓ Urging the authorities to implement the protection measures ordered by the National Human Rights Commission and the Inter-American Human Rights Commission and already agreed by the shelter's director and the authorities;
- ✓ Calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of the staff at the Belén Migrants' Shelter so that they can continue their work to defend the rights of migrants in Saltillo;
- ✓ Calling on the authorities to investigate all abuses against migrants and the staff who run the shelters;

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JANUARY 2011 TO:**

Minister of Interior

Lic. [Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta](#)

Secretario de Gobernación

Bucareli 99, 1er piso

Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc

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**Email: [secretario@segob.gob.mx](mailto:secretario@segob.gob.mx)**

**Salutation: Dear Minister/ Señor Secretario**

President of National Human Rights Commission

Dr. Raúl Plascencia Villanueva

Presidente, Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH)

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**Fax: (+52) 55 5668 0767**

**Email: [secpartpresidencia@cndh.org.mx](mailto:secpartpresidencia@cndh.org.mx)**

**Salutation: Dear President/Estimado Presidente**

Governor of Coahuila

Profesor Humberto Moreira Valdés Gobernador del Estado de Coahuila

Palacio de Gobierno, 1er. Piso Juárez e Hidalgo s/n, Saltillo, C.P. 25000

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**Fax: +52 844 438 0728 (and say: me puede dar tono de fax por favor)**

**Email: [s.particular@coahuila.gob.mx](mailto:s.particular@coahuila.gob.mx)**

**Salutation: Dear Governor/Estimado Señor Gobernador** Also send copies to: Belén Migrants' Shelter, [humanidadsinfronterasac@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:humanidadsinfronterasac@yahoo.com.mx), and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country. Please check with your Section Office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 277/09. (Index: AMR 41/053/2009). Further information <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/053/2009/en>

## **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 since 2003, despite government commitments to ensure respect of migrants' rights.

Further information on UA: 277/09 Index: AMR 41/089/2010 Issue Date: 08 December 2010