

## **Release on the position of North Zone Network regarding the behavior of the National Guard on the US-Mexico Border**

On March 29, 2019 a decree creating the National Guard was released, which, to this date, has been deployed in different states including border states with the United States of America.

Since June 22, 2019 pictures started to circulate showing the National Guard detaining immigrants alongside the Rio Bravo located in Juarez, and two days after, different media channels reported on the deployment of 15,000 soldiers and police officers to the northern border with the purpose to halt immigrants and transfer them to the custody of the National National Immigrant Institute (INM for its acronym is Spanish).

In the midst of these actions, on June 23rd, 2019, approximately at 7:00 pm, a convoy of military vehicles with approximately six (elementos) each with the National Guard logo on their left shoulder went to the front of Migrant Center Exodus (CAME for his acronym in Spanish) located in the Ferrocarril Colony in Agua Prieta, Sonora in response to an armed person that was currently in front of the CAME facilities. The military officers proceed to interrogate the municipal officer located in front of CAME as established through a municipal decree in order to protect the victims of serious crimes that are currently sheltered in the facilities.

After the revision and interrogation of the municipal agent, one of the military agents, knocked the Immigrant Center's doors and when being attended identified himself as a National Guard officer proceeding to ask for information regarding the people that were currently shelter at the facilities and he was informed that the information he was asking for could not be provided. At that point, the officer started to ask a series of questions regarding the Center's operations, such as donors and taxes, and proceeded to request access to the interior of the Center mentioning that it was a public facility and as such should allow people to enter. The officer continued with the interrogation and asked to verify if the people who were inside the Center were there voluntarily because according to him it was suspicious that the doors were locked; he verbalized his intention to have an immigrant verification and call the National Immigrant Institute indicating that in his responsibilities as a National Guard officer included the rescue of immigrants - all this with an intimidating attitude.

CAME staff reassured him that the Center complies with the law and that is not a public facility and that it was not possible to grant him access to the facilities without a warrant. During the interaction, another officer of the National Guard recorded CAME

co-workers with a cellphone. Then, already having established communication with the National Commission on Human Rights, who asked for the sending of photographs of the situation in that moment, that same co-worker of CAME took various photographs and the official signaled that the photographs had been done in an “illegal” manner.

This situation prolonged until 8:23 pm when officers of the National Guard left without further explanation as well as their vehicles adding to a total of five.

We are extremely concerned about this type of behavior that seeks to delegitimize efforts of humanitarian aid and the defense of immigrant rights that we have been engaged in for decades as well as other organizations across the country. Intimidating advocates is unacceptable - especially coming from those who are “rescuing immigrants.”

The Federal Government is responsible for the potential misuse of the footage recorded at CAME as well as other illegal attempts to enter into the Center.

We encourage the three branches of government to respect the human rights of people in the context of mobility that are currently on national territory; as well as abstaining from opposing the actions of defense and humanitarian aid from different sectors of civil society. This type of abuse is exactly what wants to be prevented by giving military agents the power to be involved in tasks for what they are not capacitated.

Lastly, we remind the Federal Government their commitment to the issue of immigration, which priority is to respect the human rights of immigrants grounded in the principle of “people’s ability to move safely, orderly, and regularly” as well as their cooperation and solidarity with civil society.

### **Network of Immigrant Centers and Immigrant Human Rights Centers**

• Casa del Migrante en Tijuana A.C. (Tijuana) • Desayunador Salesiano “Padre Chava” (Tijuana) • Instituto Madre Asunta AC (Tijuana) • Comedor “Cáritas” (Mexicali) • Casa del Migrante Betania, A.C. (Mexicali) • Casa Maná (Mexicali) • Módulo Fronterizo “Juntos en el Camino” (Mexicali) • Centro de Atención al Migrante Exodus, A.C. (Agua Prieta) • Centro de Recursos para Migrantes (Agua Prieta) • Centro Comunitario de Atención al Migrante y Necesitado (CCAMYN) (Altar) • Centro Comunitario de Ayuda a Migrantes (C-CAM) (Caborca) • Luz y Esperanza en el Desierto (Caborca) • Comedor para Migrantes del Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Nogales) • Iniciativa Kino, A.C. (Nogales) • Casa del Migrante Divina Providencia (San Luis Río Colorado) • Casa del Migrante Culiacan (Culiacán) • Casa del Migrante Chihuahua, Uno de Siete Migrando, A.C. (Chihuahua) • Casa del Migrante en Juárez (Ciudad Juárez) • Centro de

Derechos Humanos del Migrante (Ciudad Juárez) • Derechos Humanos Integrales en Acción (DHIA) (Ciudad Juárez) • Frontera y Dignidad de Acuña (Casa Emaús) (Ciudad Acuña) • Casa del Migrante Frontera Digna (Piedras Negras) • Casa del Migrante Saltillo (Frontera con Justicia A.C.) (Saltillo) • Casa del Forastero Santa Martha Asistencia Social y Formación Juvenil, A.C. (Monterrey) • Casa INDI (Monterrey) • Casa Nicolás (Guadalupe, N.L.) • Casa Monarca. Ayuda Humanitaria al Migrante, A.B.P. (Santa Catarina) • Casa San Juan Diego y San Francisco de Asís, A.C. (Matamoros) • Módulo de Atención Católica a Migrantes (Matamoros) • Casa del Migrante Nazareth, A.C. (Nuevo Laredo) • Casa del Migrante de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Reynosa).

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