

Chiapas Coast, October 26, 2018

UPDATE MIGRANT EXODUS

The more than six thousand people who comprise the bulk of the migrant Exodus traveled today the longest stretch so far in Chiapas, passing between the towns of Pijijiapan and Arriaga. Starting at three o'clock in the morning they began their journey along the roadside, waiting for long hours for some means of transportation that would allow them to travel the more than 100 kilometers of the route. In the first hours of the journey, there was limited institutional support for humanitarian assistance, security and protection of human rights for the people. At dawn we observed a greater deployment of humanitarian and logistical support by the municipalities of Pijijiapan, Tonalá and Arriaga. Even so, the greatest source of solace and support in the face of the emotional and physical exhaustion experienced by the people who are part of the exodus continues to come from the solidarity of local communities, and social and religious organizations.

As we observed in the last two days, the people and families decided to return due to exhaustion, disinformation and the difficult environmental and institutional conditions of the exodus, are exposed to the absence of accompanying protocols for repatriation by municipalities, consulates and institutions in charge of attention to vulnerable groups, as in the case of children. This absence translates into long waits in places where there is no guarantee of safety, food and health.

We have observed some local expressions of rejection and xenophobia towards the migrant population, reinforced by some formal and social media. Given this, we demand institutional intervention to identify and sanction acts that promote discrimination against migrant people.

In the journey between Ciudad Hidalgo and Tapachula we have witnessed once again the strategy of terror against displaced persons. At noon today approximately 450 people who spent the night in Ciudad Hidalgo walked in an orderly and peaceful way to Tapachula, "guarded" by municipal and federal police patrols. Suddenly, they were cornered by three private buses, four vans from the National Institute of Migration (INM) and federal police. There was an immediate panic when people were forced to get into the vans. Most people were able to flee in the bushes, but again families, children and adolescents were trapped. On this occasion, several media outlets witnessed the action and circulated videos showing the violence of the operation and the separation of children from their parents. People, including unaccompanied children, were detained and taken to the Siglo XXI Migration Station [detention center].

We urgently call for the cessation of these detention practices, which violate rights and inflict disproportionate physical and psychological injuries, especially to children and adolescents.

In the afternoon we learned about the proposal made by Enrique Peña Nieto, president of Mexico, called "You are at Home." (Estas en tu Casa"). Following this announcement, a representation of the migrant exodus set out some positions. The government proposal should be understood as reflecting a systemic lack of institutional incapacity on issues such as humanitarian assistance and recognition of international protections, while strengthening the mechanisms of control, detection and migration detention- as happened with the 450 people mentioned. The announcement, in addition to not responding to need to address of the causes of the exodus, restricts and conditions human mobility only to the states of Chiapas and Oaxaca.

Finally, as the Observation and Monitoring Group for Human Rights in Chiapas, we will conclude the accompaniment of this group of people in the Migrant Exodus that is about to enter the State of Oaxaca. Our work will continue to monitor and document human rights violations of migrants

who cross the border through different parts of Chiapas. Likewise, we echo the call of the Caravan-Exodus to all Mexican civil society to come together to stop, monitor and denounce abuses and harassment toward migrant people and those who accompany them.

Signatories: Iniciativas para el Desarrollo Humano, Una Mano Amiga en la Lucha contra el SIDA, American Friends Services Committee - Oficina Latinoamérica y el Caribe, Servicio Internacional para la Paz (SIPAZ), Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados (SJR) y Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes (SJM), Otros Mundos Chiapas, Colectivo Cereza, Médicos del Mundo Suiza, Francia y España, Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, Servicios y Asesoría para la Paz (SERAPAZ), Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdova, Centro de Derechos Humanos Digna Ochoa, Centro de Derechos de las Víctimas de la Violencia Minerva Bello” y Voces Mesoamericanas Acción con Pueblos Migrantes.