



Coalición de Derechos Humanos

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27 Migrant Deaths Reported as Arizona Enters a Historical Cold Spell *Nearly 80% Remain Unidentified in Arizona Deaths*

Arizona—The number of migrant deaths recovered since the fiscal year began on October 1, 2006 has reached twenty-seven, up from twenty-four this same time last year, as Arizona enters an historical cold spell that has resulted in snow and freezing temperatures in many areas along the border. Numbers compiled from the Pima, Yuma, and Cochise County medical examiner offices indicate the alarming fact that only six of the twenty-seven bodies recovered have been identified—a mere 22% of the total. Since 1995, it has been estimated that more than 1/3 of all border deaths remain unidentified.

“The disturbing numbers of unidentified bodies on our borders continues to cause unimaginable pain to families” says Violeta Dominguez of Derechos Humanos. “Countless men, women and children lie unidentified while families endure the torture of not knowing what has become of their loved ones.”

As the increased militarization of the border in the form of walls, drag roads, checkpoints, stadium lighting, and military troops has been implemented along the Southern border over the last decade, the numbers of migrant deaths has also increased in a startling parallel. Unchecked vigilante activity and anti-migrant legislation has served to create a xenophobic and divisive atmosphere that does not lend itself to a dialogue and public discourse that is desperately needed in both border communities and on a national level.

“We must demand a true national dialogue about the issues that have created the human rights crisis we see on a daily basis on the border” continued Dominguez. “Until we can truly address migration as a result of our unscrupulous economic policies and militarization as the methodical violation of human rights that it is, we will not see the justice on the border that our communities cry out for.”

The list of migrant deaths is available on the Derechos Humanos website: <http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/deaths.php>. This information is available to anyone who requests it from us and is used by our organization to further raise awareness of the human rights crisis we are facing on our borders.

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