



**Coalición de Derechos Humanos  
Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras**

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**U.S. Border Patrol Unconscionable Obstruction of Humanitarian Aid**

July 11, 2005

The Coalición de Derechos Humanos/Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras is outraged by the recent arrests of two *No More Deaths* volunteers as they evacuated three migrants in need of emergency medical attention. Such outright targeting of humanitarian aid meant only to attempt to stop the increasing numbers of migrant deaths occurring each summer in the Arizona-Sonora desert is morally reprehensible.

When the migrants, one of whom had been vomiting for three days and had bloody diarrhea, were assessed by two doctors and one nurse via telephone, volunteers were advised to bring them into town, where a doctor could evaluate the extent of their emergency. On route to Tucson, the vehicle was pulled over by U.S. Border Patrol and all five occupants were taken into custody. Shanti Sellz and Daniel Strauss, both 23, have been charged with “transporting illegal aliens” and “obstruction of justice.”

In a time when the number of migrant deaths increases each year, it is unacceptable that the U.S. government interfere with humanitarian efforts to stop border deaths. Since the fiscal year began on October 1, 2004, at least 167 migrants have lost their lives attempting to cross the U.S.-México border. This number would undoubtedly be even higher were it not for the humanitarian efforts such as those provided by local human rights organizations, as well as BORSTRAR, Border Patrol’s search and rescue unit. As the need to put human lives first has become apparent to all people of conscience, it is an affront to our moral dignity that any individual who is merely attempting to prevent death, particularly in a situation of emergency medical distress, would be charged with violating any law.

The Coalición de Derechos Humanos/Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras demands that the charges against Daniel Strauss and Shanti Sellz be immediately dropped. Efforts to prevent further deaths on our borders should be applauded, not punished, and the cost of our deadly border policies, the root problem of the current human rights crisis, must be evaluated. Until then, we will continue to witness the tragic deaths of our migrant brothers and sisters on the border.

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