



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

Post Office Box 1286
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**For Immediate Release
Protest Operation Lateral Repatriation!
Department of Homeland Security—U.S. Border Patrol
Wednesday, September 12, 2003
1970 W. Ajo Way
5:00 pm**

Call, fax, and protest failed U.S. border policies!
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The Coalición de Derechos Humanos/Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras calls on all concerned friends and allies to participate in a day of protest. On Wednesday, September 17th, supporters will call, e-mail, fax and protest the Department of Homeland Security and its dangerous border policies. The protest will take place at the U.S. Border Patrol Station on Ajo Way. The continued implementation of failed border policies and further militarization of our borders must be halted immediately!

Starting Monday, September 8, 2003, under Operation Lateral Repatriation, up to 300 individuals being deported/voluntarily returned out of Arizona will be rounded up, placed on chartered planes, and dumped at the ports of Del Rio/Acuña, McAllen/Reynosa, Laredo/Nuevo Laredo, and El Paso/Ciudad Juarez, Texas. This will include the deportation of women and families. (It has been incorrectly reported in the media otherwise, but anyone over the age of 18 or children under 18, if with their families, are candidates.)

Operation Lateral Repatriation perpetuates anti-immigrant policies and illustrates the ineptitude our flawed border policies simply because it fails to address the underlying factors that necessitate the migration of people to the U.S. The fact that these individuals and families will be left in the border communities of Ciudad Acuña, Reynosa, Nuevo Laredo, and Ciudad Juarez — towns that are of the poorest in the nation—will only serve to wreak havoc upon the communities at the border, and extreme hardship to the individuals. Such a dramatic influx of individuals to areas that are unprepared, economically and logistically, for such a strain on their communities, is yet another piece to the larger war on immigrants.

This Operation also fails to address the fact that over the past 10 years, 93 women have been brutally murdered and dozens remain missing in Juarez, México. The murders have yet to be solved, and the reports of human rights abuses have many concerned. To send individuals, under the pretext of “saving them from a death in the desert” and “deter alien-smuggling operation” to communities that, contrary to what border patrol have stated to media, do not have the resources to help displaced migrants, is not only reprehensible, but utterly irresponsible.

This news comes just after a report by the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, *Human Rights & Human Security At Risk*, which finds that “since immigration enforcement and services were placed within the new Department of Homeland Security just six months ago, abusive and discriminatory immigration enforcement has become even more entrenched, seriously jeopardizing community safety and compromising access to services.” Operation Lateral Repatriation clearly reflects these findings.

The continued disruption to our communities, persecution of immigrants in the name of national security, and the further militarization of our borders must be halted. Migrants have been funneled to their deaths by flawed U.S. border policies, and this newest tactic will only result in more displacement, disruption, and death. Operation Lateral Repatriation is reflective of an “out of sight, out of mind” mentality, and is unacceptable to all people of conscience.

For more information, please contact Derechos Humanos at: (520) 770-1373

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