

Wednesday, August 10, 2016

Open Letter to Jeh Johnson:

The reason for this letter of demands is to make it known to you that since Monday August 8th we have started an "INDEFINITE HUNGER STRIKE."

The Immigration Department has made a public announcement stating that in family detention center parents and children are detained no longer than 20 days.

WE WANT TO DISPROVE THIS INFORMATION!!

We are 22 mothers who are detained at Berks Family Residential Center being mothers who have been from 270 days to 365 days in detention with children ages 2 to 16 years old, depriving them of having a normal life, knowing that we have prior traumas from our countries, risking our own lives and that of our children on the way until we arrived here, having family and friends who would be responsible for us and who are waiting for us with open arms and that immigration refuses to let us out. Seeing these injustices, we have decided to go on an indefinite hunger strike until we obtain our immediate freedom because all of us left our countries of origin fleeing violence, threats and corruption that not even the government of each of our countries in Central America can control.

On many occasions our children have thought about SUICIDE because of the confinement and desperation that is caused by being here. The teenagers say BEING HERE, LIFE MAKES NO SENSE, THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO BREAK THE WINDOW TO JUMP OUT AND END THIS NIGHTMARE, and on many occasions they ask us if we have the courage to escape. Other kids grab their IDs and tighten them around their necks and say that they are going to KILL themselves if they don't get out of here. The youngest kids (2 years old) cry at night for not being able to express what they feel. For a long time, the children have not been eating well, but they have never paid attention to our complaints about the food until now.

We are desperate and we have decided that: WE WILL GET OUT ALIVE OR DEAD. If it is necessary to sacrifice our lives so that our children can have freedom: WE WILL DO IT! Putting aside the threats we are receiving from one of the psychologists and some doctors in this facility.

We are calling on the government to take action on this matter and open their eyes, letting them know that IMMIGRATION is acting against the law and is mocking them, making arguments that are false; besides our children are entitled to freedom according to the case of Flores, and still they are here with us.

We hope that our voices are heard, so that we can have the FREEDOM that we NEED so much."

1. Mother with 12-year-old son with 365 days in detention.
2. Mother with 12 and 16-year-old daughters with 365 days in detention.
3. Mother with 6-year-old daughter with 365 days in detention.
4. Mother with 6-year-old son with 365 days in detention.
5. Mother with 7-year-old son with 340 days in detention.

6. Mother with 6-year-old son with 335 days in detention.
7. Mother with 15-year-old son with 305 days in detention.
8. Mother with 4-year-old daughter with 304 days in detention.
9. Mother with 9-year-old son with 300 days in detention.
10. Mother with 2-year-old son with 300 days in detention.
11. Mother with 4-year-old daughter with 277 days in detention.
12. Mother with 14-year-old daughter with 276 days in detention.
13. Mother with 7-year-old son with 276 days in detention.
14. Mother with 7-year-old daughter with 271 days in detention.
15. Mother with 2, 8 and 9-year-old children with 270 days in detention.
16. Mother with 3-year-old son with 270 days in detention.
17. Mother with 6-year-old son with 269 days in detention.
18. Mother with 4-year-old son with 240 days in detention.
19. Mother with 9-year-old daughter with 180 days in detention.
20. Mother with 7-year-old daughter with 120 days in detention.
21. Mother with 14-year-old daughter with 80 days in detention.
22. Mother with 7-year-old son with 60 days in detention.