

Rights Action
September 17, 2014
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**WHY ARE PEOPLE FLEEING HONDURAS AND GUATEMALA
And What Is Happening To Them On The Way North**

“80% Of Central American Women, Girls Are Raped Crossing Into The U.S.”

Below, a Huffington Post article on the desperate situation of women and girls fleeing the exploitation, poverty, repression and violence (including rape), corruption and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras.

Rights Action Fundraising Newsletter, September 2014

Find a summary of your funds at work, January-August, 2014:

<http://www.rightsaction.org/action-content/fundraising-newsletter-why-are-people-fleeing-honduras-and-guatemala-and-what-we-are>

Matching Donor, until September 30

An anonymous supporter will match all donations, up to \$25,000, until September 30.
Please send your tax-deductible donation for the work and struggle of these community-based organizations.

To Donate: See below



(Some of the Mayan Qeqchi women from the Lote 8 community, who were gang-raped by mining company security guards, soldiers and police in 2007, as part of a violent, illegal forced eviction of their home community. 11 women from Lote 8 are participating as plaintiffs in civil lawsuits in Canada against Hudbay Minerals and the Guatemalan Nickel Company.)

80% Of Central American Women, Girls Are Raped Crossing Into The U.S.

The Huffington Post, By Eleanor Goldberg , September 12, 2014

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/12/central-america-migrants-rape_n_5806972.html

As the number of Central American women and girls crossing into the U.S. continues to spike, so is the staggering amount of sexual violence waged against these migrants who are in search of a better life.

According to a stunning Fusion investigation, [80 percent of women and girls crossing into the U.S. by way of Mexico are raped](#) during their journey. [That's up from a previous estimate of 60 percent](#), according to an Amnesty International report.

This year alone, immigration authorities expect more than [70,000 unaccompanied minors](#) to come through the United States unlawfully, the majority of whom are from Central American countries of El

Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The number of unaccompanied Central American girls caught at the Southwest border has rapidly outpaced the number boys, according to a July Pew Research study. Through May, the number of unaccompanied girls younger than [18 caught at the US-Mexico border increased by 77 percent](#).

But while many of these girls are [fleeing their homes because of fears of being sexually assaulted](#), according to the UNHCR, they are still meeting that same fate on their journey to freedom. Rape can be perpetrated by anyone along the way, including guides, fellow migrants, bandits or government officials, according to Fusion. Sometimes [sex is used as a form of payment](#), when women and girls don't have money to pay bribes.

The assaults are so common that many women and girls take contraceptives beforehand as preventative measures.

What's particularly disconcerting is that the fact that these figures may not even represent the full grim picture. There is one unit in Mexico that is committed to investigating and prosecuting crimes against migrants, Erin Siegal McIntyre, one of the Fusion reporters who wrote the sexual violence story, told HuffPost Live.

Yet, though thousands of women are passing through Mexico, [the unit reported that it's seen only six cases](#) of assault against migrant women this year, which includes kidnapping, rape and armed robbery. The issue, McIntyre says, is that [these victims are too afraid to come forward](#) both because of the stigma that's associated with rape and the fact that they fear being sent back home.

"The very authorities who should be handling such complaints are also in most cases the ones that are tasked with rounding up migrants and deporting them back to their native country," McIntyre said. "It's very hard to get people to open up about stuff like this."

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS (Canada)

Make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8
- Credit-Card Donations (Canada): <http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>

(Rights Action (USA) is going through a transition, and is not accepting donations at this time. Stay tuned!)

Matching Donor, Until September 30: Rights Action is grateful to have an anonymous supporter agreeing to match all donations (up to \$25,000) until September 30. Please send your tax deductible donations for the work and struggle of these community organizations.

Say No To "Business As Usual"

The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, and North American companies and investors (including public pension funds like Social Security and the Canada Pension Plan) maintain profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran

elites, turning a blind eye to death and suffering by drought, repression, violence and impunity that are the norm in both countries.

Send, and keep on sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to your own elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators), to your media, and to your own pension and investment funds, asking why our governments, companies and investment firms do nothing about the deep, endemic poverty, repression and violence, and environmental and health harms associated with North American businesses, while benefiting from these economic relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran political, military and economic elites.

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