

May 2015

Your Excellency President Obama -

For us it is an honor and a great pleasure to write to you, but at the same time, we lament writing you under these circumstances.

We are women with children who are currently detained at the detention center in Karnes, Texas. Among us are families who have been detained for nine months and others who have been here for less time. Immigration doesn't want to release us because we have a prior deportation. Many of us have never lived in this country before: in the past we have come and, as we entered the country, we were caught and deported. And now that we are here again, because of this prior deportation we feel that we are being treated as if we were serious criminals because we have no rights to anything. We go before the judge but he tells us that it is not in his hands to grant us a solution, but that immigration can release us. When we talk with immigration, they tell us that the judge will be the one to grant us our release. And so it has gone for nine months and they still don't release us.

We have cases of reasonable or credible fear. We do not feel that we are in conditions to be able to do our final case hearings while we are locked up because we are in poor mental health. We suffer from constant headaches, we can't sleep for thinking about so many problems. For these reasons, many mothers loose when they go to their final hearing with the judge.

Our children don't eat, they don't want to go to school, and they feel bad when they see hundreds of families come and go from this detention center. What worries us the most is that they say that they are going to throw themselves off the top of the building because they won't let us leave. Other adolescents say that they prefer to tie a sheet around their necks and kill themselves because they no longer want to be detained here. We come fleeing from violence in our home countries, seeking refuge and protection here, but we never thought that they were going to treat us like this. We have been despised, humiliated, deceived, and rejected.

For this reason we have conducted two hunger strikes asking for justice and freedom. The first hunger strike was from March 30 to April 3, and the second hunger strike was from April 14 to April 21. This is completely true, because immigration lies about everything so that they will look good. We can't put up with these lies from immigration any more. The judge has given a bond to our children on the condition that immigration releases us mothers with them, but immigration refuses to do so.

On April 27, (ICE Director) Saldaña came and we spoke with her for ten minutes because she didn't give us more time to explain to her what is happening. We let her know about some of our problems and concerns and we gave her a letter explaining our problems and what we want, but we have not gotten a response. For this reason

we are writing to you to help us. We ask that you free us and grant us refuge. Please give us a chance to demonstrate to you that we are honest, responsible, and hardworking mothers. We want our children in the future to be men and women who benefit society, but we need your help. We will respect the laws and put them into practice. Please.

May God bless you and all your family today and always.

Sincerely,

(Here follows the list of names and A numbers)