

## **Five Families Torn Apart by Customs and Border Patrol**

The Texas Civil Rights Project, the Women's Refugee Commission, the University of Texas School of Law Immigration Clinic, and Garcia & Garcia Attorneys at Law, P.L.L.C., filed an Emergency Request for Precautionary Measures with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on behalf of parents systematically separated from their children at the United States-Mexico border. The petitioners are as follows:

### **Vilma Aracely López Juc de Coc and her 11-year-old son**

Vilma was forced to flee her village in Guatemala after her husband was brutally murdered. The government couldn't protect them. Despite her low income, Vilma managed to leave with her son in order to save them from the killers. Upon being detained by Border Patrol agents, her son was taken away from her. The agents told her that she wasn't allowed to see him. They said she'd be deported, but not whether her son would join her, or if she'd be reunited with him. She hasn't seen her son since they were separated on May 22, 2018.

### **Antonio Bol Paau and his 12-year-old son**

Antonio is from Ixcán, Quiché, in Guatemala. He was detained around May 22, 2018. He and his son were taken to a detention center, and Antonio was placed in a cell while his son was told to stay outside. When Antonio exited the cell, his son was gone. He was not even able to say goodbye to him. He wasn't told why they were separated or where his son was sent, only that he would see his son again "tomorrow." But days have passed and he has not been reunited with him. Antonio fears that "tomorrow" may never come.

### **Leonel Chub Cucul and his 11-year-old son**

Leonel and his son are also from Guatemala, in El Estor. He and his son were apprehended by Border Patrol agents in Texas around May 21, 2018. The agents took his son away from him, but did not tell him why. When Leonel asked where they were taking the boy, the agents refused to answer. He has hardly eaten since then due to his worry about the wellbeing of his son. Leonel said through tears that if he's deported and his son stays behind, "[he] will die of sadness." Leonel's only request is to be reunited with him again.

### **María Andrés de la Cruz and her three children, ages 11, 8, and 7**

María left Guatemala because of threats and violence. When she was apprehended around May 22, 2018, Border Patrol agents asked for her children's information, and took them all to a very cold holding cell, commonly known as "hielera," or "ice chest." Border Patrol agents did not ask her why she had left her country. After she was processed, the agents took her children away without giving her a reason, and told her she would see them again at some point after her court hearing. She is still not reunited with her children.

### **Dagoberto A. Melchor Santacruz and his 16-year-old son**

Dagoberto and his son are from El Salvador. They were detained by Border Patrol agents around May 22, 2018. The agents told him that asylum in the United States was "not available," and that he couldn't be with his son. They didn't tell him where his son was, why they were separated, or if he'd be able to see him again. His son is deaf in one ear and suffers from frequent nose bleeds. Dagoberto wants to be reunited with his son and is worried about his medical conditions, but authorities have refused to provide any information.