



# SOUTHWEST WORKERS' UNION

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## R E P O R T O F R A M A C A R T Y ' S I L L E G A L D E P O R T A T I O N

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### **Amnesty International Visits Port Isabel Detention Prison – Violence Ensues as Retaliation on Prisoners and the Community is Threatened by Sheriff Deputy and DHS**

Los Fresnos, TX- International Human Rights group, Amnesty International (Sarnata Reynolds, Policy Director, Refugee & Migrant Rights, Amnesty International USA and Daryl Grisgraber) met with Rama Carty June 02, 2009. Carty is an outspoken prisoner at the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC).

On the morning of June 3rd, 2009, Rama Carty requested to meet with Amnesty International for a second time, before he was to be illegally deported. Instead, he was beaten and dragged away as fellow prisoners witnessed this abuse. DHS/ICE illegally transferred him to Louisiana to be deported to Haiti as retaliation for denouncing Human Rights Violations at the Port Isabel Detention Prison. Southwest Workers' Union received a phone call at 6:15am that morning by prisoners notifying them that Rama Carty had been moved for transfer and deportation (which happened around 5am or so). Fellow prisoners were extremely worried for Rama Carty.

Southwest Workers' Union was asked to contact Sarnata Reynolds (Policy Director, Refugee & Migrant Rights, Amnesty International USA) and Daryl Grisgraber and ask them to stop his processing. Rama said Amnesty International should call D.C. (because they are now in charge of his case) to try to stop the transfer. His request was that Amnesty International Reps. request to see him on their visit to PIDC.

Amnesty International representatives told Southwest Workers' Union that it would take time to process Rama because they had to get a ticket for his travel as well. We repeated that we were told that "he will be transferred today".

Later, Southwest Workers' Union was told by fellow prisoners that the guards dragged Rama (from the back) and beat him (kicked and punched). According to prisoners who witnessed the assault, there were about 4 officers, and 1 ICE officer (Lt. Saldivar- male) involved.

Rama called later that morning, around 8am to confirm what his fellow prisoners had told us. He said he was being processed for transfer to a detention center in Louisiana and that the the next step was deportation to Haiti, where he would receive no medical care, food, or water (due to the crisis in Haiti). He again requested that Amnesty International representatives Sarnata Reynolds (Policy Director,

Refugee & Migrant Rights, Amnesty International USA) and Daryl Grisgraber request to see him to stop the transfer. He said it had to be done as soon as possible because his transfer was already being processed.

Southwest Workers' Union relayed this message to the representatives shortly after speaking with Rama Carty.

Rama Carty is a U.S. citizen and has the documentation to prove it. The assault and illegal deportation is an obstruction of justice. He had filed a civil action for Declaratory Judgment by Jury Trial in the District of Massachusetts and had not received a response. The Court of Appeals in the First Circuit dismissed his Emergency Stay of Removal because he did not have the legal resources at the Port Isabel Detention Prison to make it happen. He has gone through 5 attorneys. He cites a U.S. Supreme Court case, NKEN VS. HOLDER, which was decided on April 22, 2009. His due process rights are being violated.

Rama wanted to remain at PIDC because he was documenting all of the abuse, and was serving as a hub for information/documentation of the abuses and due process violations. He did not want their work and efforts to get lost/stopped.

After speaking with Amnesty International representatives, Anayanse Garza and other community members and organizations also made phone calls to the Department of Homeland Security, President Barack Obama, Congressman Solomon Ortiz, Senator John Cornyn, and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson to report the abuse.

We also called the San Antonio field office overseeing the PIDC and spoke with James Bentson, who presented himself as the Assistant Field Director. Southwest Workers' Union attempted to report the physical abuse of Rama Carty and his forced illegal deportation but James Bentson tried to discourage this by responding, "I find that hard to believe." When we asked him to repeat himself he became angry. Anayanse Garza then told him that his response was not appropriate and that "if this is what happens when Amnesty International is in the facility we can only imagine the abuse that takes place when there is no one visiting the facility." He gave us a hotline to call and report the abuse but was not helpful in this emergency.

Due to James Bentson's negative response we find it hard to believe that a proper and transparent investigation will be carried out.

***We demand that there be a freeze on Rama Carty's deportation until there is a proper investigation of his abuse and illegal deportation.***

Southwest Workers' Union community members gathered outside the Port Isabel Detention Prison and were confronted by an ICE officer and told to leave DHS property. Anayanse Garza notified the officer that community members were on the property requesting to see the Director of the facility about Rama Carty's illegal deportation and the abuse that took place. The officer left, and community members continued to wait to speak to the Director of the facility.

While members waited, Amnesty International representatives left the facility.

We were notified that Rama Carty had already been transferred.

When community members were leaving they were confronted by a Sheriff Deputy who had been called in by DHS. Upon his arrival an ICE officer in a DHS pick-up truck and other ICE officers riding in an empty 15 passenger van also parked near the community members to intimidate concerned community members.

Anayanse Garza explained to the Sheriff Deputy that they had requested to talk to the director of the facility and were not told by the ICE officer that the director of the facility was refusing to see them. We were never told by the ICE officer that they had called the Sheriff to forcibly remove the concerned community members. Anayanse Garza also asked the Sheriff Deputy, "where is the police asking what they (DHS/ICE) are doing (in there)?"

This afternoon we received information that Rama Carty was transferred to the LaSalle Detention Facility, 830 Pinehill Road, Jena, Louisiana 71342. This illegal deportation was in direct retaliation for his struggle to expose the Human Rights Violations at the Port Isabel Detention Prison and is an obstruction of justice.

It is a shame that this abuse was able to take place right under Amnesty International's nose. DHS and ICE show with these actions that they have no respect for Human Rights or the community that takes a stand to defend them. These actions show that there is lack of transparency in any investigations that take place and that it is of the utmost urgency to have *community members and Southwest Workers' Union* inside the facility on a day without prior notice to DHS and ICE to monitor and observe the real conditions in which prisoners are subjected to on a regular basis.

These conditions and the secrecy that surrounds them are equivalent to such as Guantanamo Bay. Our community deserves a response from DHS and ICE regarding this and to put a stop to Rama Carty's politically motivated deportation and the obstruction of justice until there is an outside independent investigation.

### **Some Background:**

Rama Carty is a known leader and participant in a hunger strike that has been going on at the PIDC since late April of this year. Hunger strike demands include the right to due process, medical attention for all detainees, access to legal resources, and end to physical and verbal abuses by guards at the facility.

Carty was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and has lived in the United States for over 38 years; he is 39 years old.

Carty has been interviewed by several news sources, including a recorded telephone interview with the Texas Observer aired on Amy Goodman's Democracy Now; an independent radio/television news source watched and listened to by millions of U.S.s.

### **Rama Carty gave four points:**

- He has filed a civil action for Declaratory Judgment by Jury Trial in the District of Massachusetts and has not heard back from them.
- He is a U.S. citizen and has proof of that.
- The Court of Appeals in the First Circuit dismissed his Emergency Stay of Removal because he did not have the legal resources down here to make it happen. He has gone through 5 attorneys.

He cites a U.S. Supreme Court case, NKEN VS. HOLDER, which was decided on April 22, 2009.

- His due process rights are being violated.