

Unaccompanied 2-year-old among 1,000 detained Central American migrants



El Paso, March 11 (RHC)-- On the U.S. southern border with Mexico, authorities detained an unaccompanied two-year-old among nearly 1,000 Central American migrants in El Paso, according to a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) report.

The record number of migrants who crossed the border is suspected to be only a fraction of some 6,000 asylum seekers who remain on the Juarez city side of the border, the Red Cross stated.

"They're hungry, they haven't had anything to drink, there's a couple dozen children with them," Dylan Corbett, executive director of advocacy group Hope Border Institute, said while members of the organization handed out food and water to the migrants through the border fence.

One border patrol agent, Jose Romero, an agency spokesman, complained that the detentions are being complicated by women and children migrants who are seeking asylum. The challenge is that the numbers are not a record, but back then -- more than a decade ago -- we were dealing mostly with adult Mexican males, which means we could arrest, process and remove them to their country of origin in hours," Romero added, lamenting that "we have a shortage of manpower, plus our agents are being pulled to

secondary duties, such as processing, feeding and transportation" of detainees.

Human rights and other advocacy groups and agencies are offering a sustained support system for the migrants. Authorities estimate that there was been a 300-percent increase in the current number of family units crossing the borders, compared to this time last year. Now, agents are specifically targeting Spanish speakers and migrants from Latin America in carrying out a new Trump administration program.

According to official statistics, there have been more than 268,000 detentions at the border since October. Shelters have received nearly 2,500 migrants from several regions of the globe, this week alone.

Comparatively, the institutions were receiving about 200 migrants a week about a year ago, Ruben Garcia, executive director of Annunciation House, which coordinates the shelter network, said.

"We have started receiving some families from Angola, the Congo, African nations," Garcia disclosed. "Some have no one to go to (in the U.S.), and they aren't going to go on. That's a particular concern." Garcia is urging churches to consider temporary "migrant hospitality centers" to help with the increase in the number of asylum seekers.

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