



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on May 1, 2018

## As Caravan Members Await Processing, Some Charged With Entering U.S. Illegally

Following the arrival of the caravan of more than 1,200 migrants from Central America at the border city of Tijuana on April 24, most of the refugee seekers waited on the Mexican side of the border after border inspectors said that the crossing facility did not have enough space to accommodate them.



Most of the migrants remained at a checkpoint between the United States and Mexico, waiting for their turn to apply for asylum. U.S. Customs and Border Protection said in an April 30 statement, “We reached capacity at the San Ysidro port of entry over the weekend, and were temporarily unable to bring additional persons traveling without appropriate documentation into the port of entry for processing. We began processing undocumented arrivals again [today].”

As most waited to enter the United States to begin the asylum process, however, the Department of Justice on April 30 filed complaints against 11 individuals believed to be members of the caravan, accusing them of illegally entering the United States.

CNN cited federal complaints identifying the border crossers as two Salvadorans, six Hondurans, two Guatemalans, and a Mexican national. All 11 face a misdemeanor charge for allegedly entering the United States illegally. One individual, who is alleged to have entered the country after being previously deported, also faces a felony charge.

Many of those charged were spotted by border patrol agents in an area of California’s Border Field State Park, about four miles west of the San Ysidro port of entry. Some of the migrants were apprehended on April 29.

Reuters reported on May 1 that U.S. border authorities had allowed eight women and children seeking asylum to enter the country overnight.

The report observed that the Trump administration was bound by international rules to accept some applications from the asylum applicants. Most in the caravan said they were fleeing death threats, extortion, and violence from powerful street gangs. If their claims can be verified, they could be eligible to receive asylum status.

Reuters noted, however, that asylum seekers must demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution at home, usually by a state entity. Central Americans fare badly in such claims because the state is rarely



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seen as directly responsible for the life-threatening situations back home.

Vice President Mike Pence promised that the asylum seekers would be processed according to U.S law, but also accused the caravan's organizers of persuading people to leave their homes to advance an "open borders" agenda.



*Photo: AP Images*

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