

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Lic. Francisco Ramirez Acuna Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 951 511 5519 Lic. Evencio Nicolas Martinez Ramirez Attorney General of the State of Oaxaca
via fax: 011 52 951 502 0530 Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz Governor of the State of Oaxaca	

July 16, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the violence that erupted on July 16 when thousands of people marched towards the Guelaguetza Auditorium to celebrate "Guelaguetza Popular," a people's alternative celebration organized by the local popular opposition movement, the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO). State and local police forces blocked their way. When some of the leaders tried to negotiate with police to let them through, they were refused. Several vehicles were set on fire; scores of protesters were injured as police used batons and tear gas indiscriminately on those present, including several journalists. At least 42 people were arrested; six are receiving medical attention, two of them with life-threatening injuries.

Two members of the local human rights organization, Committee for the Liberation of Detainees of 25 November, were badly injured. Men in civilian dress forced **Jesus Alfredo López García** into a pickup truck, where a policeman severely beat him and told him he was going to die. As witnesses started to take pictures he was released; the Red Cross took him to the hospital where he was treated for several serious gashes on his head. **Cesar Grijalva** was returning to the Committee office when five uniformed policemen tried to arrest him. One policeman twisted his arm behind his back and slashed his wrist with a piece of broken glass; the wrist required surgery.

The authorities have refused to disclose where the detainees are being held or allowing them to contact their families. Human rights organizations have filed a federal injunction (amparo) against incommunicado detention. We fear that the detainees may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment and unfair trials.

We have previously written several times, urging authorities to quell the police violence against supporters of the People's Popular Assembly (APPO) and teachers' union (SNTE): (Sept 13 2006, Oct 26 2006, Nov 21 2006, Dec 26 2006, January 26 2007, April 25 2007). **We again strongly urge that you**

- conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the attacks on Jesus Alfredo López García and Cesar Grijalva and bring those responsible to justice;
- ensure that all those detained on July 16 are located, clearly identified and informed of the charges against them, allowed immediate access to their families, adequate medical attention and legal counsel of their choice;
- ensure they are protected from torture or ill-treatment;
- ensure that further measures to uphold the peace and public order during demonstrations in Oaxaca fully respect international human rights law and adhere to the highest policing standards.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
 Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández, President of the Nacional Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax 011 52 55 5681 7199
 Ambassador Antonio O. Garza, Jr ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5207-0091
 William Duncan, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
 Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de derechos humanos, Local human rights organisation ~ via fax: 52.55.539 91336
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich ~ via email
 U.S. Representatives Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: