

via fax: 01152 55 53 46 09 08 Lic Octavio Alberto Orellana Wiarco Special Federal Prosecutor on Crimes against Journalists	via fax: 011 52 951 511 5519 Lic. Evencio Nocolas Martínez Ramírez Attorney General of Oaxaca
via fax: 011 52 951 502 0530 Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz Governor of the State of Oaxaca	via fax: 011 52 55 53 46 09 08 Lic. Francisco Javier Ramírez Acuña Minister of the Interior of Mexico

August 16, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the lives of journalist **Alberto Fernández Portilla** and his colleagues **Daniel Pérez Espinoza** and **Edwin Meneses Santiago**. Alberto Fernandez Portilla is the director of the Oaxacan newspaper Semanario del Istmo and producer of the news program BBM Noticia on the radio station Radiorama-XEKZ. On August 5, at 1:30am, when he was on his way home, a man ran towards him with a pistol, shouting, "So that you do not forget my leader" and fired three times, hitting him in the abdomen, left leg and right arm. His family took him to a hospital where he is recovering. Following this incident, Daniel Pérez Espinoza and Edwin Meneses Santiago began receiving several threatening phone calls, saying things such as, "You are next; we are not going to fail this time."

The three journalists believe that these incidents may be related to their recent radio and press reports on drug-trafficking in the streets, allegations of stealing oil from the Mexican oil company pipelines and reports of corruption in the union representing workers at the oil company.

Three police officers are guarding Alberto Fernández in the hospital to protect him from further attacks, and his case is now being investigated by the Oaxaca public prosecutor's office and the Federal Public Minister. On August 8 Edwin Meneses filed a complaint with the Oaxaca public prosecutor's office, asking them to investigate the death threats he has received; Daniel Pérez plans to do the same soon.

These incidents are an escalation of the violence in Oaxaca, especially against journalists, that has been occurring since May 2006 and about which we have written to Mexican and Oaxacan officials many times in 2006 (Sep 13, Oct 26, Nov 21, Dec 26) and 2007 (Jan 26, Apr 25, Jul 11, Aug 14)/15/07, 7/16/07). Again, **we urge the following:**

- ensure that Alberto Fernández Portilla, Daniel Pérez Espinoza and Edwin Meneses Santiago receive protection measures to guarantee their safety, in accordance with their wishes;
- conduct a full, prompt and impartial investigation by the federal authorities into the attack on Alberto Fernández Portilla and death threats against Daniel Perez Espinoza and Edwin Meneses Santiago;
- carry out your duty to ensure that those responsible for attacks on journalists are held accountable in order to prevent future attacks and create a climate in which journalists can exercise their right to freedom of expression without fear of reprisal.

For Peace with Justice,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Dr. Jose Luis Soberanes Fernandez, President of the National Human Rights Commission ~ via fax
 Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de Derechos Humanos, a local human rights organisation, ~ via fax
 Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Embassy of Mexico in the US ~ via fax
 Ambassador Antonio O. Garza, Jr, US Embassy in Mexico ~ via fax
 William Duncan, Desk Officer for Mexico, US State Department ~ via fax
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States ~ via fax
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and U.S. Representatives Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email
 UA208/07 Mexico

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