

via fax: 011 52 747 471 9801; 011 52 747 471 4788; 011 52 747 471 9956 Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo Governor of the State of Guerrero, Mexico	via fax: 011 52 747 471 21 90 Lic. Juan Alarcon Hernandez President of Human Rights Commission of Guerrero
via fax: 011 52 747 472 2328 Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia Attorney General of the State of Guerrero, Mexico	

February 25, 2008

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the death of **Lorenzo Fernández Ortega**, a leading member of the Me Phaa Indigenous People's Organization (Organización del Pueblo Indígena Me Phaa - OPIM) between February 9 and 10 in Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero State. Since mid-January he had been working in the municipality of Ayutla, two and a half hours away from his home in El Camalote community. Because of the distance, he was staying at his employer's warehouse in Ayutla, together with other colleagues. He did not return to sleep in the warehouse on February 9. His body was found in Ayutla's river on the morning of February 10. The Local Prosecutor's Office picked up his body and noticed signs that he had been tortured.

Prior to Lorenzo Fernandez' disappearance, a colleague reported that three armed men with a list of names came near the warehouse on February 6 and asked him if he knew Lorenzo Fernández. When he answered that he did not know him, the men left. In mid-January, Lorenzo Fernández had told his sister Ines Fernández Ortega and her husband Fortunato Prisciliano Sierra that he was afraid for his own safety and that of other members of OPIM because unknown men had approached him asking questions about the organization and their work. On February 6, he reiterated his concerns with another leading member of OPIM, Otilia Eugenio Manuel.

Otilia Eugenia Manuel, who has been a target of threats since 2004 and is recipient of protection measures by the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, received a threatening phone call on February 9. Since the death of her brother, Ines Fernández Ortega and her husband Fortunato Prisciliano Sierra have also received several silent phone calls.

As a member of OPIM, Lorenzo Fernández had campaigned and supported the 14 Me Phaa indigenous men who were forcibly sterilized in 1998 and the case of his sister Ines Fernández Ortega, a Me Phaa indigenous woman who was raped by military soldiers in 2002.

These incidents are the latest in a series of attacks and threats against the OPIM about which we wrote to you on September 1, 2007. We **strongly urge** that you

- conduct a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the killing of Lorenzo Fernández Ortega and bring those responsible to justice;
- conduct a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threats suffered by OPIM members Ines Fernández, Fortunato Prisciliano and Otilia Eugenio Manuel;
- ensure that Fortunato Prisciliano, his wife Ines Fernández, and Otilia Eugenio Manuel receive adequate protection measures to guarantee their safety, in accordance with their wishes and the recommendations of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montana "Tlachinollan" AC via US mail

Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana ~ via fax: 202 728 1698

Ambassador Antonio O. Garza, Jr ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5207-0091

William Duncan, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752

Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ fax: (202)458-3992

US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Latta, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 49/08 Mexico

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