

via fax: 011 52 55 5277 2376 Lic. Felipe Calderon Hinojosa President of the Republic Mexico	Fax: 011 52 951 511 6879 Sr. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz Governor of Oaxaca, Mexico
via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Lic. Francisco Ramírez Acuna Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 951 511 5519 Lic. Lizbeth Cana Cadeza Attorney General of Oaxaca, Mexico

January 26, 2007

We are extremely concerned about the violence against demonstrators by state authorities in Oaxaca that began with the teachers' strike in May. We have written you four letters in the past four months (ISep 13, Oct 26, Nov 21, Dec 26) asking that you quell the police violence against supporters of the People's Popular Assembly (APPO) and teachers' union (SNTE).

On January 13 a peaceful march organized by COFADAPPO (Committee of Families of the Assassinated, Disappeared and Political Prisoners of Oaxaca) was attacked by municipal and state police. Some protesters were severely beaten; at least seven were arrested and detained: **Jesús Villaseca Pérez, Miguel López Cruz, Vladimir González Martínez, Rogelio García, José Poncia Neri, Amulfo Sequel Velasquez, and Alberto Vásquez.**

Also that same day, more than 50 State Preventative Police (PPE) violently broke up a peaceful encampment of family and friends of some 59 political prisoners. (Approximately 10,000 people marched in Oaxaca on January 6 calling for the release of all political prisoners). The police created panic when they violently evacuated about 40 people, many of whom had been camped out in front of the Miahuatlán de Porfirio Díaz prison since December 20.

During both police actions, police beat protestors, threatened them by cocking their weapons and holding them to protestors' heads and verbally threatened and insulted them. Some protestors fleeing the police attacks took refuge in local homes.

In response, the Archbishop of Oaxaca called a special Mass on January 15 at the Metropolitan Cathedral. Outside the cathedral, 100 State Preventative Police, in full riot gear, along with municipal police, surrounded the building and maintained a constant presence. Inside the cathedral, the Archbishop called for the release of the political prisoners and demanded that the Oaxaca State government respect the people's constitutional right to peaceful protest.

In light of the facts presented, we strongly urge you to

- Ensure that security forces are properly commanded and controlled to act appropriately during protests;
- Carry out an independent and impartial investigation into the violence of January 13;
- Release those detained January 13;
- Revise the charges against detained activists to ensure the evidence against them is adequately substantiated;

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández, President of the Nacional Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax 011 52 55 5681 7199
 Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez ~ 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
 Red Oaxaqueña de Derechos Humanos ~ via email
 LIMEDDH (Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos) ~ via fax: 011 52 95 1514 5298
 Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ fax: (202)458-3992
 US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Reps Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

1-17-07 Rights Action Oaxaca

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