

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 <b>Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta</b> Minister of Interior, Mexico	via fax: 011 52 951 502 0530 <b>Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz</b> Governor of the State of Oaxaca, Mexico
via fax: 011 52 55 5277 2376 <b>Lic. Felipe Calderon Hinojosa</b> President of the Republic of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 55 5346 0908 <b>Lic. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza</b> Attorney General of Mexico
Via email: <a href="mailto:portalSCJN@mail.scjn.gob.mx">portalSCJN@mail.scjn.gob.mx</a> <b>Ministro Presidente Guillermo I.Ortiz Mayagoitia</b> President of the Supreme Court of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 55 5681 7199 <b>Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández</b> President of the National Human Rights Commission of Mexico

July 5, 2009

Dear Sirs:

We are concerned for the safety of **indigenous communities in Ocotlán Valley** and **for members of CODEP-APPO** (Committee in Defense of the Rights of the People-Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca) and **their taxi service** that provides transport between communities, particularly after the assassination of taxi driver and CODEP leader **Sergio Martínez Vásquez** and the beating of **Agustin Ríos Cruz**.

In order to protect their air, water, soil and human health, indigenous communities in Ocotlán Valley have been demanding the closure of mines operated by Canadian-owned corporation Fortuna Silver. Tests carried out by independent laboratory Sanica have confirmed the presence of arsenic, cyanide, lead and mercury stemming from mining activities. Local newspaper *El Imparcial* reported that government officials were being paid by the company to maintain their support for the mining project and that the company has armed paramilitary groups to intimidate people who oppose them. Paramilitary forces have been used by the government of Oaxaca to repress demonstrations by APPO and other popular social movements since 2006.

On June 7, Sergio Martínez Vásquez, a member of CODEP's state council, was shot dead; paramilitaries are suspected as the perpetrators. Odontologist Agustin Ríos Cruz, another CODEP member, was recently beaten almost to death. Repression against members of popular social movements since 2006 has included assassinations (notably, US journalist Brad Will), raids and imprisonment. Some, including Agustin Ríos Cruz, have been forced into exile.

Because of the incidents mentioned above, **we urgently demand:**

- an immediate public investigation into the murder of Sergio Martínez Vásquez and the assault on Agustin Ríos Cruz, make the results public and bring the perpetrators to justice;
- an end to the violation of human rights of the indigenous people of Ocotlán, the members of CODEP and its taxi service, and the teachers who support them;
- the departure of mining companies that have been contaminating water and soil in the Ocotlán. Valley.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

cc: Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698  
Political Affairs Section, US Embassy in Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834  
Mary Stickle, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752  
Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992  
US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email  
23 June 2009\_ AFGJ\_Mexico

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