

via email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx Arely Gómez González Attorney General of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 961 618 8050 ext. 21122 Manuel Velasco Coello Governor of Chiapas State, Mexico
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April 11, 2016

Dear Attorney General Gómez González and Governor Velasco Coello:

We are deeply concerned for the safety of **Fidencio Gómez Sántiz**, an indigenous member of the National Front for Socialism (FNLS). He was last seen on March 5, accompanied by his wife and son at the Jet Ja transport terminal near the local market of Ocosingo, Chiapas State. After leaving his wife and son, who were travelling to a relative's house, Fidencio Gómez Sántiz started back to his home in the municipality of Altamirano. Approximately five minutes later, he did not answer when his son called to make sure his father had taken public transport home. He has not been seen since.

FNLS is a grassroots movement working to denounce and publicly condemn violations of human rights perpetrated by the Mexican government, specifically those related to enforced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, arbitrary detentions and political prisoners. In November 2015, FNLS organized a round of activities in Mexico City to denounce the situation faced by indigenous human rights defenders in Chiapas. During the campaign, assassination attempts were made against Matías Flores, Jesús Hernández Reyes and Rubicél Hernández García. This followed the killing of indigenous human rights defender Héctor Sántiz López in September 2015 (cf out letter of November 26, 2015.)

The Cerezo Committee, a prominent local human rights organization, believes that the disappearance of Fidencio Gómez Sántiz may have been an enforced disappearance carried out with the participation or acquiescence of agents of the Mexican government security forces. This opinion is based on several previous acts of intimidation against members of FNLS in Chiapas by agents of state security, and the general pattern of forced disappearances in Mexico. After his visit to Mexico in October 2015, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that there are "at least 26,000 missing persons, many of whom are believed to have been forcibly disappeared since 2007."

In view of this information, we **strongly urge** that you

- take all necessary measures to locate Fidencio Gómez Sántiz and ensure his security as well as that of his family and members of FNLS;
- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the disappearance of Fidencio Gómez Sántiz, publish the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
- guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai and Christine Stonebraker-Martínez
Co-Coordinators

copies: Mexican Commission for Defense and Promotion of Human Rights ~ via email
Dr. Miguel Basáñez Ebergényi, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 833 4320
William H. Duncan, Acting US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
Vaida Vidugiris, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3650
Francisco José Eguiguren Praeli, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline Defenders 3/31/16_Mexico

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