

IRTF

InterReligious Task Force on Central America
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via fax: 011 52 747 47 12190/ 011 52 747 47 10251 Lic. Juan Alarcon Hernandez President of the Human Rights Commission of the State of Guerrero (CODDEHUM), MEXICO	via fax: 011 52 747 47 14788 Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero MEXICO
via fax: 011 52 55 51 28 02 34 Maestro Ricardo Sepúlveda , Director de Derechos Humanos/ Secretaria de Gobernación, México City	via fax: 011 52 747 47 22328 Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Guerrero

June 12, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Taskforce on Central America, are very concerned for the safety of **Albertano Penalosa Domínguez**, his family, and other environmental defenders in Guerrero State. On May 19, Albertano Penalosa Domínguez and his four sons were ambushed by unknown individuals as they were arriving home in the community of Banco Nuevo in the municipality of Petatlan, Guerrero State. **Twenty-year old Armando and nine-year old Adatuel were killed; fifteen-year old Adali, nineteen-year old Isaac and their father were seriously wounded.**

Albertano Penalosa Domínguez is one of the founders of the peasant environmental group Organización Campesina Ecologista de la Sierra de Petatlan (OCESP). He is also one of the 14 OCESP leaders against whom arrest warrants have been issued in connection with the 1998 murder of Abel Bautista, for which fellow environmental activist Felipe Arreaga has been detained and is on trial. Amnesty International believes that these legal procedures are politically motivated in reprisal for the local environmentalists' role in peaceful protests against the **excessive and illegal logging of forests in the mountains Guerrero State**. Alberto Penalosa Dominguez is unwilling to go to the nearest town to receive medical treatment for injuries he suffered during the ambush for fear of being detained. **Celsa Valdovinos**, Felipe Arreaga's wife and leader of Organización de Mujeres Ecologistas, is also in danger.

We urge you to:

- **ensure the protection of Albertano Penalosa Domínguez**, his family and other environmental defenders in the region such as **Celsa Valdovinos**;
- **begin an impartial, prompt and full investigation** into the May 19 ambush that resulted in the deaths of Armando and Adatuel Penalosa and bring those responsible to justice;
- **suspend the politically motivated arrest warrants** issued against founding members of the OCESP in connection with the 1998 murder of Abel Bautista, pending a review of the original murder inquiry, and provide protection for the 14 OCESP leaders and their families;

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

copies: Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez, Embassy of Mexico ~ fax: 1 202 728 1698
Ambassador Antonio O. Garza, Jr, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ fax: 011-52-55-5511-9980
William Duncan, Desk Officer for Mexico, US State Department ~ fax: 202.647.9894
U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via email
U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email
Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montana "Tlachinollan" AC ~ via U.S. mail

UA # / 50/05 Mexico

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