

Governor of Chiapas: Lic. Pablo Salazar Mendiguchia Fax: 011 52 961 61 209 17/ 256 18	Attorney General of Chiapas: Lic. Mariano Herran Salvatti Fax: 011 52 961 61 657 24
President of the State Human Rights Commission: Lic. Yesmin Lima Adam , Fax: 011 52 961 6025784	

August 12, 2006

Dear Sirs:

The latest abuse (in the long and sordid history of abuses) in Chiapas occurred on July 17 in San Christobal de las Casas, Chiapas.

Manuel Gómez Hernández, a Tsotsil indigenous worker with the Fray Bartolomeo de las Casas Human Rights Center, received a telephone call at his home at 9pm. The caller identified himself as “German” and said he was a judge in Zinacantan municipality. Manuel Gómez was told to stay out of a case he’s working on in Zinacantan or “you will suffer the consequences...we can find you anytime.” In the past he has been intimidated and attacked as a result of human rights work.

In at least four previous letters we have protested abusive actions against Tsotsil people and other cases being defended by the Human Rights Center in Chiapas:

Sep 1, 2004 – two lawyers falsely charged and illegally detained; their three clients beaten and tortured to obtain confessions

Aug 31, 2005 – another prisoner tortured in an informal detention facility

Dec 12 2005 – two members of Civic Action–Chiapas who were exposing official corruption in Hurricane Stan relief aid were severely cut, kicked and beaten by six men. Also detained and harshly interrogated was the director of the newspaper El Orbe, which reported official corruption.

Mar 12 2006 – a journalist with the newspaper Cuarto Poder who exposed corruption by the state Schools Construction Committee was accused of defamation and released on bail; he is now being threatened with a fine of \$20,000.

The authorities must not do less than

1. call for a prompt, impartial investigation into the July 17 threat, make the results public and bring those those responsible to justice;
2. ensure that Manuel Gómez does not suffer any further intimidation and that he will be protected, in accordance with his wishes;
3. recognize the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to conduct their activities without restrictions of fear of reprisals, as outlined by the United Nations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

Copies to: Human Rights NGO Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolome de las Casas ~ via US mail
 Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez, Ambassador of Mexico to the US ~ via fax
 Antonio O. Garza, Jr , US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax
 William Duncan, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax
 Paolo Carozza, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax
 US Senators DeWine & Voinovich ~ via email
 US Reps Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 202_06 Mexico

The following people hereby urge that you take action on this matter as indicated in this letter.