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Lic. Manuel Andrade Diaz
Governor of Tabasco, MEXICO

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Lic. Angel Mario Balcazar
Attorney General of Tabasco, MEXICO

November 28, 2004

We are deeply concerned for the safety of Victor Manuel Ulin Hernández, a reporter from the Verdad del Sureste newspaper in Tabasco State. On the evening of November 1 he was forced into a car by two men who then drove him away. They insulted and beat him and then subjected him to a mock execution. He was released two hours later in the community of Platano y Cacao. Mr. Hernández believes that the attack was an attempt to prevent him from carrying out his investigative work. Shortly before his abduction, he had published an article questioning the involvement of a state government official in the reorganization of the student council of a local university.

We are concerned that further attacks could take place against Mr. Hernandez or his family. His assailants have continued to visit his house. We are also aware that there have been at least three reported killings of journalists in Mexico this year. We realize that the regional branch of the State Public Prosecutor's Office of Tabasco has initiated an investigation into the abduction. We hope that you make sure that the investigation is not prejudiced because a state government official was the subject of the newspaper allegations made by Mr. Hernández.

In addition, we strongly urge you to

- Immediately take all necessary and effective steps to protect Victor Manuel Ulin Hernández and his family, in accordance with their wishes
- See to it that Mr. Hernández be allowed to perform his legitimate work as a journalist without threats and harassment
- Make certain that the current investigation into the incident is prompt, conclusive and impartial, that the results are made public and that those responsible are brought to justice

The threats to journalists in Mexico must end. As a consequence of your high position in Mexico, you have the authority and the responsibility to put an end to incidents such as those detailed above. We urge you to do so.

For Peace with Justice,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

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