

via fax: 011 52 961 61 657 24

**Lic. Amador Rodriguez Lozano**  
Minister of Justice of Chiapas, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 961 618 8050 ext. 21122

**Lic. Juan José Sabines Guerrero**  
Governor of Chiapas, Mexico

December 12, 2007

Dear Sirs:

Once again, we are compelled to express our deep concern for the safety of the members of the indigenous community of Viejo Velasco Suárez, Chiapas State. **Pedro Nunez Perez, Mariano Perez Guzman, Miguel Moreno Montejo and Juan Penate Montejo**, the four persons who disappeared on November 13, 2006, are still missing. Two bodies found near the site of the attack in July 2007 have not yet been identified.

Our fears arise from reports of ill-treatment, arbitrary detentions and unfair trials. We have written two previous letters about the unjust detention of **Diego Arcos Meneses**, an indigenous Chol community leader from Nuevo Tila (11/23/06, 3/22/07). After 300 armed men attacked Viejo Velasco and killed four community members on November 13, 2006, Diego Arcos came to aid injured and displaced persons. Authorities then detained him as a possible witness. When he refused to sign a witness statement (as is his right, especially since he doesn't read or speak Spanish), they beat him and put him into pre-charge detention for 90 days.

Diego Arcos was falsely charged with murder, based mostly on biased testimonies from people who live in Nueva Palestina, a nearby community where many of the attackers came from. In August 2007, a federal injunction recognized the lack of evidence against him; charges were dropped and he was finally released from state prison on December 4.

However, arrest warrants issued in February 2007, in the same flawed investigation, are still pending against 20 other individuals, including inhabitants of Viejo Velasco.

In light of these facts, **we again urge you to**

- conduct an independent and impartial review of the investigation that led to the unjust detention of Diego Arcos Meneses and bring those responsible to justice;
- make reparations to Diego Arcos Meneses and his family;
- conduct a review of the judicial proceedings against other Viejo Velasco Suárez community members who have been accused of participating in the attack;
- conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the attack on Viejo Velasco Suárez and bring those responsible to justice, in fair and transparent legal proceedings;
- promptly identify the two bodies found near Viejo Velasco Suárez in July 2007
- conduct a criminal investigation into the disappearances Pedro Nunez Perez, Mariano Perez Guzman, Miguel Moreno Montejo and Juan Penate Montejo, the four persons who disappeared on November 13, 2006

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan-Szittai, Coordinator

Copies: Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolome de las Casas, A.C. ~ via US mail  
 Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández, President of the National Human Rights Commission ~ via fax  
 Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 1 202 728 1698  
 Antonio O. Garza, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Mexico ~ fax: 011 52 55 5511 9980  
 William Duncan, Desk Officer for Mexico, US State Dept ~ fax: 202.647.9894  
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax  
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and U.S. Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 307/06update Mexico

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