

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Lic. Juan Camilo Mourino Terrazo Secretaria de Gobernacion	via fax: 011 52 951 511 5519 Lic. Evencio Nicolas Martínez Ramírez State Attorney General of Oaxaca, Mexico
via fax: 011 52 951 502 0530 Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz Governor of the State of Oaxaca, Mexico	via fax: 011 52 951 503 0220 Lic. Jaime Mario Pérez Jiménez President of Oaxaca Human Rights Commission

July 13, 2008

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are gravely concerned for the lives of **Jorge Aragon Martínez**, a teacher and member of the Political Committee of the Zaachila Community Assembly, and for his family, particularly his 19 year-old son, who was threatened with death shortly after a political demonstration in which his father took part.

On June 20, Oaxaca State Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz was due to visit Villa de Zaachila, a municipality near the state capital. Shortly before he was to arrive at the main square, a group of protesters used tires and rocks to block the roads. A local human rights non-governmental organization reports that the mayor and other municipal officials, aided by a group of municipal police and supporters of the local government, attacked the protesters, who threw stones to defend themselves. One of the protesters filmed the mayor's brother and his father shooting at the crowd with pistols. They narrowly missed one protester; several others were beaten and one was taken to the hospital with a broken nose. To our knowledge, state and municipal authorities have taken no action on the shooting.

On June 21, Jorge Aragon Martínez, received a text message saying, "The Zuliks hired someone from Sola to kill your son. . . and asked for it to be done with an AK-47." Shortly after, there was another message saying "They're coming and know where you are." Members of the Zulik family were present during the attack on the protesters and the threat appears to be in retaliation for one of them being hit by a stone. On June 24, Jorge Aragon Martínez was photographed by a municipal official as he was leaving the school where he works.

Because of these incidents, we **strongly urge** you as officers of the government

- to provide adequate protection for Jorge Aragon Martínez and his family, in accordance with their wishes.
- carry out a swift and impartial investigation into the text message death threats received by Jorge Aragon Martínez and bring those responsible to justice.
- conduct an investigation into the disturbances in Villa de Zaachila on June 20 and bring to justice anyone implicated in human rights violations including those responsible for shooting one of the protesters.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

Copies: Comite 25 de Noviembre ~ via email
 Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
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 Dr. Jose Luis Soberanes Fernandez, President of the National Human Rights Commission~ via fax: 011 52 55 5681 7199
 US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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