

Via Fax: 011 52 961 618 8088 Lic. Juan José Sabines Guerrero Governor of the State of Chiapas, Mexico	Via Fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Lic. Fernando Francisco Gomez-Mont Urueta Minister of the Interior, Mexico
via Fax: 011 52 961 616 5724 Mtro Raciél Lopez Salazar Chiapas State Prosecutor, Mexico	

June 2, 2009

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about **Jerónimo Gómez Saragos, Antonio Gómez Saragos, Miguel Demeza Jiménez, Sebastian Demeza Deara, Pedro Demeza Deara, Jerónimo Moreno Deara, and Alfredo Gómez Moreno** of the Tzeltal indigenous community of San Sebastian Bachajon, Chiapas state, who were arrested in police operations in April and committed for trial on May 8. We fear they may be tried on the basis of statements taken after they had been tortured and threatened. The local human rights organization representing the men has filed an appeal against their committal for trial.

All the men have stated that they were beaten at the time of their arrest, tortured while in pre-charge detention at "Quinta Pitiquito" and then forced to give preliminary statements to representatives of the State Attorney General's Office implicating them in robbery. They did not have access to adequate legal representation, nor were they provided with an interpreter who speaks their indigenous language. They claim that other inmates in "El Amate" prison, where they are now detained, are threatening them, with the acquiescence of prison officials. Three of the men - Jerónimo Gómez Saragos, Miguel Demeza Jiménez and Jerónimo Moreno Deara - have not received adequate medical attention for the injuries sustained when tortured and ill-treated while in pre-charge detention between April 7 and April 30.

On April 26, we wrote to you, urging you to ensure that the men were not tortured or ill-treated and assure they had access to independent legal counsel of their choice.

We now strongly urge that you

- ensure that the seven men are not subject to ill-treatment by prison officials or other prisoners acting with the complicity of prison authorities;
- provide appropriate medical treatment to Jerónimo Gómez Saragos, Miguel Demeza Jiménez and Jerónimo Moreno Deara, for the physical injuries they sustained when tortured and ill-treated while in pre-charge detention between April 7 and April 30.
- order a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into allegations of torture and ill treatment against suspects named above, make the findings public and hold accountable those responsible;
- guarantee the right of all those in detention to a fair trial, including the exclusion of any statements obtained under duress or through other violations of due process guarantees, such as statements rendered without access to adequate legal representation or appropriate interpreters.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

CC: Centro de Derechos Humanos "Fray Bartolome de las Casas" A.C. ~ via US mail
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
Antonio O. Garza, Jr., US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5207-0091
Mary Stickles, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Sutton, Wilson, Space ~ via email

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