

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414/3415/3416  
**Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta**  
Minister of Interior of Mexico

via fax: 011 52 961 61 657 24  
**Mtro. Raciél López Salazar**  
Attorney General of Chiapas, Mexico

July 4, 2009

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Taskforce on Central America, are extremely concerned for the safety of **Diego Cadenas Gordillo**, Director of Fray Bartólome de Las Casas Human Rights Center (Frayba) in San Cristóbal de las Casas and **other staff members** of Frayba, which provides support and legal assistance to indigenous people in the state of Chiapas who are suffering human rights violations. Our concern is prompted by the following recent incidents of harassment:

- June 14 – When Cadenas was returning home he was watched by a black four-wheel-drive vehicle with tinted windows and no number-plates parked close to his house;
- June 15 - He saw the same vehicle when he was on his way to work. A few minutes later, Frayba members saw a white four-wheel-drive vehicle with no number-plates a few meters from the office. A man inside was taking photographs and video footage of the office.
- June 16 - Diego Cadenas and another Frayba member, Jorge Armando Gómez, saw a black four-wheel-drive with three men inside parked near where they had just met with Frayba president Samuel Ruiz García. When Diego Cadenas asked the driver why he and the men were following him and whether they were from the intelligence agency, the Center for Investigation and National Security (CISEN), they laughed and said no.
- June 19 - Diego Cadenas was driving home when he saw a grey four-wheel-drive with no number-plates and two men inside wearing baseball caps. One of them held a camera with a zoom lens pointed at Diego Cadenas.

Because of these events, we **strongly urge** that you :

- investigate the harassment of Diego Cadenas Gordillo and members of Frayba;
- provide protection for Diego Cadenas Gordillo and members of Frayba, in accordance with their wishes;
- follow the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders which recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without obstacles or fear of reprisals.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

cc: Lic. Juan Carlos Moreno Guillen, President of Chiapas Human Rights Center ~ via fax: 011 52 961 639 6615  
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698  
Political Affairs Section, US Embassy in Mexico ~ via fax 011-52-55-5080-2834  
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 ~ via email  
US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

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