

via fax: 011 52 55 5346 0908 Arturo Chávez Chávez Attorney General of the Republic of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 951 502 0530 Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz Governor of Oaxaca, Mexico
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April 2, 2010

Dear Sirs:

We are writing to express our deep concern for the safety of **Juan Manuel Martínez**, Oaxacan political activist, and his lawyer, **Alba Cruz**. Juan Manuel Martínez was unfairly detained in 2008. A flawed investigation by the Office of the Federal Attorney General led to his being charged with the 2006 murder of US journalist Brad Will. While in prison, he was threatened and intimidated by men who came to visit him. In December 2009, men were seen taking pictures of his children at school. Also in December, the family dog was shot dead.

Juan Manuel Martínez was released on February 19, 2010 after a federal court ruled that the charges against him were baseless and ordered the state trial judge to release him. However, according to his lawyer, the state judge included in his release papers spurious claims about his involvement in the killing. We are very concerned that these claims may be used to file unfounded charges against Juan Manuel Martínez and may again result in his arbitrary detention.

Martínez's lawyer, Alba Cruz, has also been attacked and threatened repeatedly. In August 2009 she received a threatening text message and, since September, her car has been tampered with: three times by unscrewing the wheels, slashing the tires and by drivers in another car twice driving off after crashing into hers while she was in it. On January 26, 2010, shortly after she saw two men standing outside her office, she received a text message saying "We've told you and that idiot. . .we are watching you, stop it with your revolution or you'll be sorry." She filed a complaint about the threats and other security incidents, but has received no effective protection measures. Requests from the Inter-American Commission of Human rights to the Mexican authorities to provide her with protection measures have not been implemented.

In view of the information cited above, **we strongly urge that you**

- provide effective protection for Juan Manuel Martínez, Alba Cruz and their relatives, in consultation with them and in accordance with their wishes;
- order a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threats and attacks against Juan Manuel Martínez and Alba Cruz;
- conduct an impartial investigation into the killing of Brad Will and ensure that Juan Manuel Martínez is not subject to arbitrary detention and unfair judicial process.

We have written several letters to federal and state officials since 2006 to protest the repression against the popular social movement in Oaxaca. There has been widespread use of excessive force, arbitrary detention, torture, and fabrication of criminal charges against protesters. Virtually none of the federal, state or municipal authorities responsible for abuses has been held accountable. We strongly urge that you exercise the power and the consequent responsibility you have to see that all human rights activists within your jurisdiction are protected.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

cc: Human Rights Organization Comite 25 de Noviembre ~ via email
 Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202-728-1698
 Carlos Pascual, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
 Mary Stickles, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-5752
 Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202-458-3650
 José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Mexico member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202-458-3650
 US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Boccheri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

UA 52/10/Mexico

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