

via fax 011 52 55 5063 3405

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
Minister of the Interior of Mexico

via fax 011 52 55 5346 0908

Lic. Arturo Chávez Chávez
Attorney General of Mexico

December 13, 2010

Dear Sir:

We are writing to express our deep concern for the safety of **Obtilia Eugenio Manuel**, founder and President of the Me'phaa Indigenous People's Organization (OPIM) and **Cuauhtémoc Ramirez Rodriguez**, one of its leaders. These Mexican Indigenous rights defenders have recently received new death threats. We believe their lives are at risk because they have been campaigning to bring Mexican soldiers to account for the rape in 2002 of two Me'phaa Indigenous women, Ines Fernández Ortega and Valentina Rosendo Cantú.

On November 28, a written death threat was delivered to the house in southern Mexico where Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and Cuauhtémoc Ramirez Rodriguez live with their children. Parts of the threatening hand-written letter read: "Hello Obtilia. Now we know where you live why are you messing around with the Ines and Valentina issue stop fucking around with the issue of the sentence of the two women ... calm down your organization's members otherwise you're dead" and "Cuauhtémoc calm down or you're dead ... stop. . . saying that the government has to comply with the sentence the government is angry that's why we are here stop fighting Ines and Valentina sentence" We have been writing to you since 2008 about our concern for Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and the numerous threats, acts of intimidation and surveillance directed against her. On March 6 2010 a written threat was delivered to the OPIM office and later that day, a man was seen watching the OPIM office and taking pictures with his mobile phone. On March 17, 2009 Obtilia Eugenio Manuel received three death threats by text message to her mobile phone. She has been followed on numerous occasions. We are aware that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has directed Mexican authorities to address the human rights violations suffered by Ines Fernández and Valentina Rosendo. In spite of this, only some of the agreed measures have been put in place and those behind the attacks remain at large.

Other OPIM activists have also suffered as a result of their efforts to investigate human rights abuses. Raúl Hernández spent more than two years in prison on fabricated charges. Four other activists had also been imprisoned with him for 11 months.

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

- Provide Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and Cuauhtémoc Ramirez Rodriguez with effective protection measures, in strict accordance with their wishes, and as requested by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights;
- carry out an immediate, full and impartial investigation into these and previous treats and attacks, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- promptly and fully comply with the Inter-American Court sentences on the cases of Ines Fernández and Valentina Rosendo.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

CC: Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montana "Tlachinollan" ~ via email
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Ambassador of Mexico ~ via fax 202.833.4320
Carlos Pascual, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax 011.52.55.5080.2834
Mary Stickles, Desk Officer for Mexico US State Department ~ via fax 202.647.5752
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax 202.458.3650
Jose de Jesus Orozco Henriquez, Mexico member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax 202.458.3650
U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich ~ via email
U.S. Representatives Brown, Voinovich, Boccieri, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Space, Latta, Sutton, Ryan, Fudge, Wilson ~ via email

UA 63/10/Mexico

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