

via fax: 011 52 555 346 0908 Marisela Morales Ibañez Attorney General of the Republic of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 747 471 9956 Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero Governor of Guerrero State, Mexico
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May 4, 2011

Dear Madam and Sir:

We are gravely concerned for the safety of the family of community leader **Javier Torres Cruz**, who was killed by armed men on April 18 in Puerto de La Mosca, Petatlán municipality, Guerrero. When his brothers Felipe and Alejandro Torres went to the scene of the shooting they were shot at as well. Felipe Torres is now recovering from serious injuries.

Javier Torres Cruz was an active member of a grassroots organization, Environmental Organization of the Coyuca and Petatlán Mountains, in which he worked to protect the highlands of Petatlán. His murder is part of a pattern of attacks and intimidation against him and his family. In December 2008 he was abducted, blindfolded, and held in an unknown location for ten days. Upon release he had bruises, particularly on his hands, and complained of severe abdominal pains. No effective investigation was carried out, and those responsible for the abduction and torture were never brought to justice.

In September 2007 Javier Torres Cruz and his uncle testified against a local political boss (*cacique*) following the political boss' alleged involvement in the killing of human rights defender Digna Ochoa in Mexico City in 2001. Local human rights organizations believe that Javier Torres Cruz's assassination is connected to his role as a witness in this case and to his outspoken denunciations of abuses committed by the military in Petatlán in recent years.

We **strongly urge** you to

- provide immediate and effective protection to the family of Javier Torres Cruz, according to their wishes.
- conduct a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the assassination of Javier Torres Cruz and the shooting of Felipe and Alejandro Torres, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice.

We are following this situation closely. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: Lic. Alberto López Rosas, State Attorney General for Guerrero, via fax: 011.52.747.472.2328
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
Political Affairs Section, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
Mary Stickle, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3992
José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, Mexico member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown and Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

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