

via fax: 011 52 747 4719956
Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero
Governor of Guerrero State, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 747 4942981
Lcdo. Alberto Lopez Rosas
Attorney General of Guerrero State, Mexico

June 7, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the attack and murder of **Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera**, Director of the Center for Study and Projects on Integrated Human Development (CEPRODEHI) in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, on May 4. He was attacked by unknown assailants as he walked home. He was an outspoken advocate of LGBT rights. Every June he and his colleagues organized an annual Gay Pride and diversity march in Chilpancingo. In previous years he and other CEPRODHEI staff had received telephone death threats warning them not to hold the march. CEPRODHEI had filed complaints with the authorities, and police had provided protection to them during the marches.

Guerrero state police investigating the assassination have reportedly held in custody for two days a friend from the LGBT community who was the last person to see Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera alive. Other members of the LGBT community have also been sought for questioning, including previous partners of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera.

While it is vital for the authorities to follow all leads, similar cases which have occurred in other parts of Mexico have sometimes resulted in police and prosecutors focusing solely on the personal relations of the victim rather than investigating possible homophobic motives for the attack.

Because we believe that Leija Herrera's murder may be related to his work at CEPRODEHI and that other members of the staff may be at risk of attack, we **strongly urge** that you

- provide other members of CEPRODEHI and LGBT rights activists in Chilpancingo protection, in accordance with their wishes;
- begin a full, impartial and prompt investigation of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera's killing and fully investigate all leads that might suggest a homophobic motive for the attack;
- support and provide protection to the organizers of the Gay Pride march, which will take place in memory of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera in June 2011.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: CEPRODEHI ~ via email
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 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

UA 137/11-MEXICO

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