

| | |
|---|---|
| via fax: 011 52 951 501 6900 Lic. Manuel de Jesús López López State Attorney of Oaxaca State, Mexico | via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora Minister of the Interior of Mexico |
|---|---|

November 14, 2011

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of the **members and clients of Consorcio Oaxaca** (Consorcio para el Dialogo Parlamentario y la Equidad Oaxaca), a women's human rights organization. On the morning of November 3, the staff found their office broken into and equipment stolen, including two computers, four memory sticks and two voice recorders. All contained valuable files of the organization's work as well as interviews with victims. We believe that those who carried out the raid were seeking information related to the organization's human rights work.

In recent months Consorcio Oaxaca staff has reported being followed by individuals unknown to them. On September 22 one staff member received an anonymous telephone call from a man who asked if Rosita Alvarez lived there. This is believed to be an allusion to a well-known Mexican song about a woman who is killed by three gun shots for declining to dance with a man.

These incidents are further evidence of threats and intimidation faced by human rights defenders in reprisal for their work. A climate of impunity prevails because official investigations rarely lead to the identification of perpetrators. Although the federal government has agreed to establish a system to make protection readily available to defenders at risk, such a system is not yet operational and the provision of security is granted on an ad hoc basis.

We strongly urge you to:

- guarantee the safety of workers at the Consorcio Oaxaca, in accordance with their wishes, so that they are able to continue their human rights work;
- carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the break-in at the office of Consorcio Oaxaca and the recent intimidations of staff, and bring those responsible to justice;
- guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisals.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: Consorcio Oaxaca ~ via email
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
Earl Anthony Wayne, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
Greg Sprow, 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 & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA_329/11_Mexico

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