

via fax: 011 52 747 471 9956
Lic. Angel Heladio Aguirre Rivero
Governor of Guerrero State, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414
Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero
Minister of the Interior of Mexico

April 4, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are very concerned for the safety of human rights defender **Maximino García Catarino** of the Na Savi Indigenous people, a leading member of the Organization for the Future of the Mixteco People (OFPM). The Guerrero State Superior Court ordered the charges against him be dropped and ordered him released from Ayutla de Los Libres prison. Although he was released on March 20, he is still at risk of reprisals.

Just before he left the Ayutla prison, a friend told him on the phone that there were people who wanted to hurt him when he returned to his hometown. We believe he is at imminent risk of retaliation by those who made false accusations against him for the homicide of Juan Teodoro García on January 21; he was arrested without a warrant and beaten. Amnesty International considered him a prisoner of conscience and remains deeply concerned for his safety.

The State also has an obligation to ensure the protection of his family members and other members of the OFPM. The State also must cancel the arrest warrants against five other members of OFPM who are part of the same criminal case: Álvaro Ramírez Concepción, Audencio Ramírez Concepción, Ambrocio García Catarino, Marcelino García Catarino, and Jorge García Catarino.

We have previously written to authorities with the State of Guerrero and the Republic of Mexico about human rights abuses against members of OFPM. We wrote to protect family members of Manuel Ponce Rosas and Raul Lucas Lucía, whose tortured bodies were discovered buried in plastic bags in Las Cazuelas, Tecoanapa municipality, Guerrero (cf our letter March 4, 2009). We also wrote after a group of men shot and seriously wounded Álvaro Ramírez Concepción, coordinator of the OFPM in Ayutla, and wounded three others (cf our letter of September 14, 2010).

We **strongly urge** that you

- immediately provide protection measures to Maximino García Catarino, his family and other members of OFPM, according to their needs and wishes;
- cancel arrest warrants against the other five members of the OFPM in the same case and under the same evidence because they are based on the now discredited evidence provided by the prosecutor;
- undertake a new impartial investigation into the killing of Juan Teodoro García;
- investigate all the authorities who are implicated in the use of the criminal justice system to persecute and punish Maximino García Catarino for his legitimate human rights actions.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: 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, Chair, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, First Vice Chair, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via 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 25/12/Update2 Mexico

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