

via fax 011 52 951 501 5000 ext 40068

Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo
Governor of Oaxaca State, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 951 501 6900 ext 20635

Lic. Manuel de Jesús López López
Attorney General of Oaxaca State, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero
Minister of the Interior, Mexico

December 31, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are concerned for the safety of members of the indigenous Triqui community whose encampment outside the governor's palace was violently evicted by municipal and state police on December 23. Riot police arrived at 12:30am and destroyed their belongings. The **beating of a pregnant woman** induced labor and resulted in the birth of a **premature infant (named Jesús) who died on December 28**. He was the third child who died at the camp in the past year.

The indigenous people of the Triqui region established the autonomous municipality of San Juan Copala of approximately 700 inhabitants on January 1, 2007. A legal provision allows indigenous communities to make decisions about their land collectively and to govern their territory according to traditional practices. In reality, the presence of paramilitary groups, working in conjunction with the state government, has impeded the political process and made life in the small town unsafe for many of its residents. Paramilitary groups battle with each other as they push for the exploitation of natural resources. Civilians are caught in the crossfire.

The Triqui have been stationed in front of government buildings for two years with a simple request: we want to go home. In an open letter to Governor Cué, camp residents stated: "...we have suffered ambushes close to our communities, forced evictions, prison, kidnapping, torture, hunger and despair." Many residents of San Juan Copala have been killed or injured in the past five years. Those at the protest camp have called on the state government to provide them with safe passage home.

After the violent eviction on December 23, the Triqui people set up another protest encampment one block southwest of the previous site.

Since 2008 we have been writing letters to officials in Oaxaca and Mexico DF to stop the violence in the Triqui region. We strongly urging that you:

- carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the forced eviction of the encampment on December 23, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- investigate alleged links between government authorities and armed groups operating in the Triqui region;
- work with Triqui community members to create safe passage to their home territory.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

copies: Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos "Bartolome Carrasco Briseño" ~ via e-mail
Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 833 4320
Earl Wayne Anthony, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
Greg Sprow, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752
Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: (202)458-3650
US Senators Brown & Voinovich and US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

Triqui_UpsideWorld_Mexico

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