

via fax: 011 52 95 1501 8100 ext 40068

Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo

Governor of Oaxaca State, Mexico

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong

Minister of the Interior of Mexico

March 21, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about death threats to **Eva Lucero Rivero Ortiz**, spokesperson for the Civic and Democratic Union of Neighborhoods, Settlements, and Communities (UCIDEBACC) in the municipality of Pinotepa Nacional in Oaxaca State. On February 15 at approximately 6pm, following her attendance at a meeting with state officials, she received two text messages from the same number: "I'm waiting for you here....you are going to die" and "you want to die."

On February 14 UCIDEBACC members **María Dolores Merino Ortiz, Reina Clavel Tapia, Cinthia Narciso Bernal** and **an underage girl**, were gravely injured after State Preventative Police officers beat them during a peaceful demonstration in Pinotepa Nacional. One of the defenders who is pregnant has serious injuries from the blows she received.

UCIDEBACC residents are opposing construction of a Coppel department store on disputed municipal land. Municipal authorities are contesting the ownership of the UCIDEBACC neighborhood's land, which was given to the Catholic Church for the poor in 1970, allowing the community to develop it (cf our letter of Oct 13 2013).

The incidents described above come in the context of constant and systematic attacks against Eva Lucero Rivero Ortiz and UCIDEBACC. Between June and August 2013, she was the victim of multiple acts of intimidation, defamation, harassment, threats and an attempt on her life. On August 25, 2013 a group of police, marines and soldiers broke into her home, stole the family's belongings and detained her husband, Librado Baños Rodríguez, a UCIDEBACC leader. Two other UCIDEBACC leaders, Felipe Rojas and Teófilo García, were also detained in August and September. An appeal of Librado Baños Rodríguez' trial is underway because of allegations of torture and violation of the right to a fair trial.

UCIDEBACC's case has been before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and before the Human Rights Ombudsman of the People of Oaxaca, which granted protection measures to Eva Lucero Rivero Ortiz and UCIDEBACC in September 2013. In spite of this, their security remains at risk.

Therefore, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate, thorough, and impartial investigation into the death threats against Eva Lucero Rivero Ortiz, publish the results and bring those to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the safety of Eva Lucero Rivero Ortiz and her colleagues, including by reinforced protection measures where necessary;
- guarantee that all human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

Copies: Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698
Earl Anthony Wayne, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
Chris Andino, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via email: andinocl@state.gov
James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via fax
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via fax

Frontline 2/20/14_Mexico

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