IRTF

via fax: 011 5255 5093 3414	via fax: 011 5274 7471 9956/0908
Sr. Miguel Angel Osorio Chong	**Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero**
Minister of the Interior of Mexico	Governor of State of Guerrero

October 13, 2014

Dear Sirs;

We are extremely concerned about college students killed and missing in Guerrero. Three students and three others were killed on September 26. As of October 6, 43 students remain missing.

On September 26 around 9pm, as 80 students of the Rural Teacher Training College of Ayotzinapa in Guerrero State were leaving the town of Iguala in three buses to return to Chilpancingo, the capital of Guerrero, they were intercepted by municipal police who opened fire without warning. More than 20 students were arrested. In four violent incidents that night, involving municipal police and unidentified gunmen, at least three students, a bus driver, a member of a local football team and another civilian were shot and killed. The location of those detained is unknown.

At 7am on September 27 when students went to the local office of the State Attorney General's Office (PGJE) to file complaints and demand information on their missing colleagues, the authorities denied all knowledge. Twenty-two municipal police officers were arrested, but the reasons for the police conduct, the involvement of superiors and the involvement of unknown gunmen have not been clarified.

On October 5 Guerrero state officials found six unmarked mass graves near Iguala, apparently as a result of information provided by some of the municipal police under arrest. At least 28 bodies that have been exhumed are awaiting forensic tests for possible identification as the abducted students.

Both federal and state Attorney General Offices are involved. The Federal Attorney General's Office (PGR) is investigating the unmarked graves and identification of the dead bodies. The Guerrero State Attorney General's Office is in charge of investigating the September 26 incidents and finding the 43 missing students. This is troublesome because the Guerrero Attorney General's Office is alleged to have links with criminal groups and it has repeatedly failed to carry out effective investigations into grave human rights violations. The seriousness of these enforced disappearances and killings and the involvement of organized criminal groups are grounds for the PGR to claim jurisdiction in the cases, but so far it has stopped short of doing so.

We **strongly urge** that
- the Federal Attorney General (PGR) assume full responsibility for the investigation into the enforced disappearance of 43 students, establish their whereabouts promptly, ensure their physical and mental safety, and bring those responsible to justice;
- PGR carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the killing of six people on September 26 and the wounding of many others at the hands of Iguala municipal police and unidentified armed men;
- keep the relatives of all victims adequately informed and give them support and protection in accordance with their wishes, including supporting the work of international forensic experts;
- conduct a full investigation into the circumstances surrounding the attack and abduction of students on September 26, including the repeated failure of state and federal authorities to investigate frequent reports of collusion between local public officials and criminal gangs.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, 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 and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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