

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 4901 Estimado Señor Presidente Enrique Peña Nieto President of Mexico	via fax: 011 52 55 5346 0908 Estimada Señora Procuradora Arely Gómez González Attorney General of Mexico
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May 16, 2015

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are very disturbed at the recent abduction of journalist **Bernardo Javier Cano Torres and three other persons** near the city of Iguala in Guerrero State. Bernardo Javier Cano Torres is one of the hosts of the program “Hora Cero” on Iguala-based ABC Radio 93.9FM. On the evening of May 7 he was on his way home when he disappeared on the road between Iguala and Teloloapan. The Guerrero state authorities confirmed his abduction, but they have not given details concerning its time or circumstances. Cano's car, which had been reported stolen, was found abandoned on the road that connects Iguala with the town of Teloloapan. Federal Police turned the investigation over to the local prosecutor's office in Iguala.

“Hora Cero” co-host Natividad Ambrosio reported that he and Cano had been subjected to pressure and were forced to switch from over-the-air broadcasting to Internet broadcasting, even during this time of frequent reporting on the campaign for the state's governor. In a recent program, they commented on the threats received by Ambrosio from one of the brothers of José Luis Abarca, the former Iguala mayor who was arrested for his alleged role in the disappearance of 43 student teachers in September 2014 (cf our letters of October 23, 2014 and April 13, 2015). The mayor's brother threatened the “Hora Cero” co-hosts for taking photos of an investigation by tax officials into the Abarca family's precious stone business.

This abduction highlights the danger for media personnel in Mexico. According to the international NGO Reporters Without Borders, at least twelve journalists have been murdered in Guerrero from 2002 to 2014. Cano's abduction came just three days after another journalist, **Armando Saldaña Morales**, was tortured and killed in the adjacent state of Oaxaca, in the town of San José Cosolapa. Another journalist, **Octavio Rojas Hernandez**, was assassinated in the same town in August 2014.

Political journalists should be free to investigate and report without fear for their personal safety. We **strongly urge** that you conduct an independent, impartial and thorough investigation in close cooperation with the federal authorities to obtain the release of journalist Bernardo Javier Cano Torres and prosecute his abductors.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator

copies: Lic. Rogelio Ortega Martínez, Governor of Guerrero ~ via fax: 011 52 74 7471 9956
 Alejandro Estivill Castro, Mexican Interim Ambassador from Mexico 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)458-3650
 Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email cidhexpression@oas.org
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

RWB 5/16/15_Mexico

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