

<p>via fax 011 52 (55) 52 77 23 76 Estimado Sr. Presidente Enrique Peña Nieto President of the Republic of Mexico</p>	<p>via email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx Estimada Señora Procuradora Arely Gómez González Attorney General of Mexico</p>
<p>via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 Estimado Sr. Secretario Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong Minister of the Interior of Mexico</p>	<p>via fax: 011 52 95 1501 8100, ext. 40068 Estimado Gobernador Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo Governor of Oaxaca State</p>

July 12, 2016

Dear Sirs and Madam:

We are extremely concerned about the killing on June 19 of journalist **Elidio Ramos Zárate**, age 45, a crime reporter for the regional daily newspaper *El Sur*, who was fatally shot in the neck by two unknown assailants driving a motorcycle. Authorities found Ramos Zárate's body at approximately 4.00 P.M. at a restaurant in the city of Juchitán, Oaxaca State. A 9-millimeter bullet case was found at the scene. Ramos Zárate was eating at the restaurant with Raúl Cano López, the brother of the owner of *Punto Critico*, another regional newspaper. Cano López was also killed in the attack.

The attack happened shortly after Ramos Zárate had finished reporting on several blockades and buses set on fire by teachers protesting in Juchitán. The teachers' union recently set up a series of blockades and protest marches across Oaxaca and other states to oppose changes to educational policy. In some places police have forcibly dispersed the protesters (cf our letter of June 26).

Ivonne Flores, editor of *El Sur*, said in an interview that a group of masked men threatened Ramos Zárate and other co-workers on June 18 in order to stop them from covering the violence. (Ramos Zárate had never reported any threats until June 18.) Flores stated that these conditions for journalists working in the State of Oaxaca are difficult. He said, "We are exposed to all (...) and we cannot do our work, we cannot freely take a photo, cover material as it should be done, to keep society informed."

According to the international NGO, *Reporters Without Borders*, Ramos was the third journalist killed in Oaxaca this year. Article 19 Mexico, a national freedom of expression organization, reported that in 2015, Mexico saw an attack against journalists every 22 hours.

Because of the murder of Elidio Ramos Zárate and our concern about the hostile climate for Mexican journalists, we **strongly urge** that you immediately conduct a thorough investigation into the murder of Elidio Ramos Zárate, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights ~ via email
Dr. Miguel Basáñez Ebergényi, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 833 4320
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Vaida Vidugiris, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3650
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: