

<p>via email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx Estimada Señora Procuradora Arely Gómez González Attorney General of Mexico</p>	<p>via fax: 011 52 95 1501 8100, ext. 40068 Estimado Gobernador Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo Governor of Oaxaca State</p>
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August 1, 2016

Dear Madam and Sir:

We are very disturbed by recent acts of harassment against indigenous and education rights defenders **Adriana Linares Arroyo** and **Rubí Cortés Salazar** in Oaxaca. On the night of July 14 an unknown individual in plain clothes began to photograph them and the license plate of their car as they were getting into their vehicle outside the Oaxacan Teachers' Hotel together with three other teachers from the Mixteca region. A dark blue vehicle followed them as they drove towards Tlaxiaco. At Viguera they were able to lose the vehicle when, for security concerns, they decided to return to the city center.

Rubí Cortés Salazar is a Mixteca member of the Multicultural Alliance of Women from Tlaxiaco (AMMOR). She is the President of the Committee for the Defense of Public Education and has played a crucial role in mobilizing parents to advocate for their children's right to education. Adriana Linares Arroyo is an indigenous Mixteca human rights defender and the General Coordinator of the State Coalition of Mothers, Fathers and Tutors in Defense of Secular and Free Education. Because of a higher number of recent threats and acts of intimidation against them, these human rights defenders requested protective measures from Secretary of the Interior Miguel Osorio Chong on June 17. The request was initially refused but a second request was approved.

There has also been surveillance and intimidation of other women who support the teachers' social movement in Oaxaca. One person is **Soledad Ramos Mendoza**, the State Coordinator for Mothers and Fathers in Oaxaca, where she has had an important role in mobilizing and informing civil society about proposed reforms in the education sector. At approximately 10pm on June 13, an unknown male standing near her vehicle made a phone call as she entered her car and then followed her. She lost the vehicle by making several detours. On June 14 three municipal police vehicles followed her.

On June 19 a police operation against demonstrators in Nochixtlán, Telixtlahuaca, Huitzo, Viguera and Hacienda Blanca left at least 8 dead and over 120 injured (cf our letter of June 26). To date, there are 75 leaders of the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE) Section 22 (Oaxaca) in prison as a result of judicial harassment, including Damián Gallardo Martínez whose detention was declared arbitrary and unlawful in November 2014 by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD). In spite of a call by the UN WGAD and many civil society organizations to quash his conviction and release him immediately, he remains in prison where he has endured torture and inhumane, cruel and degrading treatments in retaliation (cf our letter of Feb 23).

We condemn the acts of intimidation described above as well as the repression of the teachers' social movement in Oaxaca and **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into acts of intimidation and threats against Adriana Linares Arroyo, Rubí Cortés Salazar and Soledad Ramos Mendoza, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of Adriana Linares Arroyo, Rubí Cortés Salazar and Soledad Ramos Mendoza, in accordance with their wishes
- cease targeting human rights defenders associated with SNTE-Section 22 and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Sincerely,

Christine Stonebraker-Martínez and Brian 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
 Roberta Jackson, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834
 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
 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: