

via fax 011 52 (55) 52 77 23 76 <b>Estimado Sr. Presidente Enrique Peña Nieto</b> President of the Republic of Mexico	via email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx <b>Estimada Sra. Procuradora Arely Gómez González</b> Attorney General of Mexico
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March 24, 2017

Dear Dear Sir and Madam:

We are shocked and saddened at the killing of journalist **Cecilio Pineda Brito**, age 38, in the municipality of Ciudad Altamirano, in Guerrero state.

At 7pm on March 2 while he was waiting for his vehicle at a car wash, at least two gunmen on a motorcycle shot at him at least 10 times, including once in his neck. He died while receiving first aid.

Pineda contributed to media outlets including the Mexican daily *El Universal* and *La Jornada de Guerrero*, and had founded the weekly publication *La Voz de la Tierra Caliente*, which ceased circulation last year. He continued to cover crime, social issues, and corruption through posts on his Facebook page Cecilio Pineda: The Instant News. According to a colleague his reporting attracted weekly threats sent via social media. In September 2015, attackers attempted to target Pineda outside his house. He survived because an assailant's gun failed to go off.

Months ago he started reporting that he was receiving death threats from organized crime groups that operated in sectors in which he was investigating. Just hours before his death, Pineda had published a video about the leader of a local criminal group responsible for kidnappings, in which he indicated that these kidnappings could not be happening without government complicity.

Mexico is the most dangerous country in Latin America for journalists, particularly those working to expose corruption and criminal networks. According to The Committee to Protect Journalists, at least 48 journalists were killed in Mexico in 2016 and 72 in 2015. The high rate of impunity for these crimes means that the killers rarely ever face justice. Numerous organizations, including the United Nations, Reporters without Borders and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, have spoken out against the violence against journalists in Mexico and have urged the government to take stronger action to bring perpetrators to justice.

The Guerrero State Attorney General's office and the Federal Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression are reported to be investigating the assassination of Cecilio Pineda Brito. We **strongly urge** that they act promptly and rapidly to find those guilty of his killing, publish the results of their findings, and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

copies: 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  
Elizabeth MacDonald and Linda Neilan, 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:**