

via US mail Sr. Presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador President of the Republic of Mexico	via US mail and email: secretario@segob.gob.mx Sra. Ministra Olga Sánchez Cordero Minister of the Interior of Mexico
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November 11, 2019

Dear President López Obrador and Minister Sánchez Cordero:

We are very concerned about the disappearance of indigenous community leader **Arnulfo Cerón Soriano**. He was last seen by his wife at 7:45pm on October 11 when he left home to give a lecture in Tlapa de Comonfort, Guerrero. At about 12pm the next day, his vehicle, with the keys still in place, was found abandoned in the residential area of Magisterio. His whereabouts remain unknown.

Arnulfo Cerón Soriano is a lawyer and belongs to the Nahua indigenous people of the La Montaña region in Guerrero. He is also a member of the Popular Front of the Mountain (FPM) where he has collaborated with the Tlachinollan Mountain Human Rights Center to defend the rights of indigenous peoples. In 2014, he was actively involved in the struggle of the parents of the "43 de Ayotzinapa," who disappeared in Iguala in September 2014. As part of the FPM, he recently accompanied a group of street vendors evicted from downtown Tlapa, as part of a city council policy of "re-accommodation" in the city of Ayotzinapa.


We are glad to learn of progress in the investigation. We read that on November 7, security agents of the Fiscalía General de Guerrero captured and detained Jorge "N" (alias "La Chiva") as a suspect in the disappearance of Arnulfo Cerón Soriano. Two others were also detained: Javier "N" y Cristal "N".


We believe the disappearance of Arnulfo Cerón Soriano is related to his human rights work. His colleagues report that he has received threats because of his confrontations with Dionicio Merced Pichardo García, the municipal president of Tlapa, whom they believe should be investigated as a suspect in his disappearance. Since October 11, his family and colleagues have received threatening phone calls that mentioned the names of his daughters. His family is also constantly monitored.

The disappearance of Arnulfo Cerón Soriano and the threats to his family cause us to be ever more disturbed by the general climate of impunity and inadequate security conditions for human rights defenders in the state of Guerrero, and in the Republic of Mexico in general. Therefore, we **strongly urge** that you

- continue a thorough and impartial investigation into the disappearance of Arnulfo Cerón Soriano—with a focus on finding the intellectual authors of the crime—publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the safety and physical and psychological integrity of the relatives and colleagues of Arnulfo Cerón Soriano
- guarantee that all human rights defenders can operate freely without fear of restrictions or reprisals from the state or the national government.

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator


 Christine Stonebraker Martínez

copies: Martha Bárcena Coqui, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via email
 Christopher Landau, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via US mail
 Political Officer, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
 Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
 Antonia Urrejola, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
 Juan José Zepeda Bermúdez, President of CEDH in Mexico City (Centro de Estudios en Derechos Humanos) ~ via email
 Peace Brigades International-Mexico ~ via email
 S!Paz ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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