

Sra. Gobernadora Evelyn Salgado Pineda Governor of the State of Guerrero	Mtro. Evelio Méndez Gómez Secretary of Public Security of the State of Guerrero	Mtra. Sandra Luz Valdovinos Salmerón Attorney General of the State of Guerrero
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October 21, 2023

Dear Governor Salgado, Secretary Méndez, and Attorney General Valdovinos:

We are writing in deep anger and outrage upon learning of the assassination of **Bruno Plácido Valerio**, leader and co-founder of the Union of Peoples and Organizations of the State of Guerrero (UPOEG). On October 17, he was shot along with his driver by a group of hitmen who fired about 20 shots, outside the Guerrero Health Secretariat in Chilpancingo. Two others, including a woman, were also hit; one of them has died as well.

Bruno Plácido Valerio, a former member of the Regional Coordinator of Community Authorities (CRAC), played a significant role in addressing crime in Guerrero. He later led the Municipal Police of San Luis Acatlán and attempted to become a multi-member deputy of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in 2012. One year later, he founded the UPOEG, distancing himself from CRAC due to its lack of focus on combating drug trafficking. Bruno believed tackling insecurity was crucial for effective resource management and improving living conditions in Guerrero.


Bruno Plácido Valerio rose to prominence in Guerrero in 2013 when he organized rag-tag teams of farmers to capture suspected gang members. His group held about 50 suspects for weeks in improvised jails, before handing them over to civilian prosecutors. By 2014, UPOEG had a presence in 41 of Guerrero's 81 municipalities, with a strong presence in Chilpancingo. The group also engaged in search efforts for the 43 missing university students from Ayotzinapa who were disappeared in September 2014.


The assassination of Bruno Plácido Valerio occurred just a few days after another UPOEG co-founder, **Juan Carlos González Olívar**, was executed by a hitman suspected to be from Los Rusos, a group connected to the Sinaloa Cartel.

We strongly condemn these killings and call on your government to:

- conduct a thorough and transparent investigation into the assassinations of Bruno Plácido Valerio and Juan Carlos González Olívar (looking for both the material and intellectual authors of the crimes), publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- consult with community activists to ensure their safety and enable them to work without fear
- collaborate with community organizations to mitigate the influence of criminal groups and implement long-term initiatives for marginalized communities

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinators


Christine Stonebraker Martínez

copies: Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via email and US mail
Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail
Ken Salazar, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via email and US mail
Political Officer, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Vance ~ via email
US Representatives Beatty, Brown, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Sykes ~ via email

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