

Mexico –

Former municipal police officers arrested for the death of 18 yr-old indigenous youth

RRN letters June 1 2004, August 14 2006

UA 179/04

RRN members first wrote to officials in Guerrero State (June 1 2004) to protect Lucía Genaro and her five minor daughters, members of the indigenous tlapanec community. Lucia's 18 year-old son Socrates died in police custody in January 2004 in Zapotitlan Tablas. Although authorities tricked Lucía into signing a document stating that her son's death was a suicide, local human rights organizations were able to exhume his body. A forensic examination concluded on March 10, 2004 that he died as a result of severe beating. Lucia's family started receiving threats after she filed a complaint with the Public Ministry in Tlapa against three Zapotitlan Tablas police officers, the municipal president and other officials. The municipal president himself even made a verbal death threat to Lucía Genaro.

Indigenous communities in southern Mexico are subject to abuses of power, arbitrary policing and judicial practices. The state authorities often fail to investigate these abuses, so local authorities act with impunity. most influence. Those who report abuses and seek redress are particularly exposed to threats, intimidation and attack.

GOOD NEWS! July 14 2006: Authorities arrested two former municipal police officers for the death of Socrates Genaro. RRN members sent another letter to authorities Aug 14 2006 because unidentified men were coming to the Genaro family house to intimidate them, threatening to abduct daughter Erika. Still, the arrest of two officers is a positive step forward toward ending the pervasive impunity enjoyed by corrupt and abusive officials at the local level, especially when indigenous people are the victims.