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PRESS RELEASE

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

6TH HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD GOES TO ABEL BARRERA (MEXICO)

BERLIN, 27.05.2011 – Mexican human rights defender Abel Barrera Hernández and the human rights centre Tlachinollan received today Amnesty International Germany's Human Rights Award. The award ceremony took place in the context of the "Celebration of Human Rights" marking the 50th anniversary of Amnesty International (28 May) at the Berlin House of World Cultures. Several artists contributed to the event (including François Breut, Sophie Hunger, Michael Mittermeier, Alice Sara Ott and Söhne Mannheims), which was presented by Reinhold Beckmann.

In his laudatory speech, Salil Shetty, International Secretary General of Amnesty International, paid tribute to the personal commitment and the strategic work of "Tlachinollan". "Abel Barrera and his staff contribute with their voice, energy, intelligence and humanity to the construction of a new Mexico where the rights of the poor and excluded cannot be trampled on with impunity."

Since 1994, Barrera and Tlachinollan's staff have been working tirelessly and taking high personal risks to support the rights of indigenous peoples in the Mexican state of Guerrero. Tlachinollan investigates cases of "enforced disappearances" and human rights abuses committed by the military. The centre's lawyers have already brought several cases of rape and abuse committed by soldiers before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. In 2011 alone, Amnesty International has launched more than 20 urgent actions to help people in Mexico who are being threatened or persecuted.

In his acceptance speech, Barrera said: "Working to promote human rights and combat poverty in Mexico is not only difficult and painful, it is life-threatening. I dedicate the award to all the people in Guerrero who lost their lives in the name of justice and human rights."

Amnesty International Germany presents the Human Rights Award to honour and support the commitment of people and organisations who – often under very difficult conditions – stand up for human rights. It is endowed with 10,000 Euros provided by Amnesty International Germany's "Stiftung Menschenrechte/Förderstiftung Amnesty International". Previous award-winners include, for example, Monira Rahman from Bangladesh (2006) and "Women of Zimbabwe Arise" from Zimbabwe (2008).

Unrestricted photos of the event can be found on our FTP server:

ai-stage01.aspdiensite.de (login: presse, password: benenson61)

For further information about the Human Rights Award and Abel Barrera, please see www.amnesty.de/menschenrechtspreis

For 50 years now, ordinary people have been doing extraordinary work. Amnesty International, the world's largest human rights organisation, fights against oppression, violence and torture. On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, Amnesty International invites you to join in: on 27/28 May 2011 or on 10 December 2011 in Berlin or throughout the year at one of our 200 events all over Germany. Make a contribution. By signing. By donating. By getting involved. www.50Jahre.amnesty.de