

# Peace Brigades International

# in México

Bulletin for the PBI Mexico Project

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## Notes on the Current Situation

### **Digna Ochoa**

Experts and attorneys conducting the case of human rights defender Digna Ochoa submitted to the coordinating group of District Attorneys of the Federal District's Attorney General's Office of Justice (PGJDF), the forensic medical and criminological reports that prove that the attorney was murdered.

In May 2003, three expert tests to prove the homicide of Digna Ochoa were presented; a forensic chemistry test, a criminological test and a forensic medical test. However these reports were not admitted by the PGJDF. Relatives and attorneys of the activist were thus forced to go to the federal courts. On February 24, 2005 the Second Criminal Court, presided by several judges of the 'First Circuit', accepted an appeal for protection, and ordered the PGJDF to accept the results submitted by the Ochoa family. The family in turn stated that "if the authorities for some reason do not comply we will take the matter to the international courts, which is another mechanism available to protect victims of an offence."<sup>1</sup> Digna Ochoa was one of Mexico's most important human rights defenders. She worked in both Guerrero and Oaxaca and documented, reported and took to trial cases related to militarization in those zones. In the cases that she conducted she emphasized the influence of economic interests on the justice system and its effects on the work of human rights defenders.<sup>2</sup>

### **Organization of the Indigenous People Me'Phaa**

The German human rights defense organization 'Front Line' demanded that Governor Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo take the necessary measures to guarantee the security and psychological and physical integrity of Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and her family from the community of Barranca de Guadalupe, municipality of Ayutla de los Libres, in light of death threats that she has received. The NGO also demanded that the Attorney General's Office of the Republic (PGR) take up the case and begin an "immediate, exhaustive and impartial" investigation into the death threats against the human rights defender, with a view to making the results public and punishing those responsible. It also requested that precautionary measures stipulated by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH) be complied with. Signed by

the Director of Front Line, Mary Lawlor, the text mentioned that, according to information received, the PGR decided not to investigate the threats against Obtilia and remitted them back to the jurisdiction of Ayutla de los Libres, from where the threats and harassment originated. They state that according to the reports they have, "Obtilia's house and her movements are under the surveillance of unknown persons who, it is presumed, have links to the Mexican Army."<sup>3</sup>

### **San Salvador Atenco**

For the past sixteen years, flower growers from the Texcoco valley have travelled to the town of San Salvador de Atenco at harvest time to set themselves up near the market. This year a contingent of local police installed themselves in the same area, an action that made selling difficult for the flower growers. The campesinos (peasant farmers) and their leader Rodolfo Cuéllar objected to these police actions and initiated a round of negotiations in order to preserve their custom of setting up in the market. The final agreement was that from May 3rd onwards, the vendors could continue to sell in the same place. Cuéllar and the flower vendors invited the Communities' Front for the Defense of the Land (FPDT), lead by Ignacio del Valle, to witness the installation of their stalls in the historic center. When they arrived at the site at dawn on Wednesday May 3rd, they discovered that the police were stationed there.

One of the first people detained was Ignacio del Valle, leader of the FPDT. The locals from Atenco organized themselves and decided to blockade the Texcoco-Lechería highway, demanding the release of their leader. The blockade continued all morning and by afternoon, clashes had begun with both state and Federal Preventive police. The police attempted to re-open the highway using tear-gas and striking at the protestors who responded with stones and molotov cocktails. By 4pm the confrontation had ended and one death had occurred; that of 14 year old Javier Cortés Santiago, who was shot with a firearm used by the state police. Among those detained was Rodolfo Cuéllar.<sup>4</sup>

At dawn of the following day more than three thousand state and federal police entered the town of Atenco. They went into houses looking for members of the FPDT and were accompanied

by hooded men who pointed out the homes where the activists could be found. They arbitrarily detained and beat more than 200 people and destroyed and pillaged houses.<sup>5</sup> Five foreigners were also detained and immediately deported from the country. The Fray Bartolome Center and the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center (ProDH) made the first formal reports relating to the torture of detainees.<sup>6</sup> Testimonies of detained women report sexual abuse and rape. The CNDH received 150 complaints, of which 16 related to sexual abuse and 7 were for rape of women aged between 20 and 50. Other sources report that up to 44 women were sexually abused.<sup>7</sup>

### **El Charco**

Eight years have passed since the El Charco massacre, and the indigenous Mixtec and Me'Phaa people from the Ayutla municipality remembered the anniversary June 7th with a commemoration event. Those who attended the event emphasized that government authorities have not investigated the crime nor have they punished those responsible. They demanded the, as yet, undelivered right to compensation for damages to widows and orphans of the crime. The night beforehand relatives those killed, authorities and neighbors united to pray in the bilingual school, where eight years ago army officers shot at Mixtecos who had remained to sleep in the classrooms after a meeting. It was here that soldiers killed 10 Mixtecos and a student from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), wounded 5 Mixtecos, and tortured and detained around 30 others, among them UNAM student Erika Zamora Pardo and regional coordinator Efrén Cortés Chávez. Attending the event were members of the Independent Organization of Mixtec Communities (OIPM) and the Organization of the Indigenous People Me'Phaa. Invited guests in attendance included a representative of La Montaña Indigenous Campesino Movement (Mocim) and survivors of the massacre, Ericka Zamora and Efrén Cortés.<sup>8</sup>

1 El Sur, April 22, 2006

2 [http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/defenders/hrd\\_mexico/hrd\\_ochoa/hrd\\_ochoa.htm](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/defenders/hrd_mexico/hrd_ochoa/hrd_ochoa.htm)

3 El Sur, March 29, 2006

4 La Jornada newspaper, May 4, 2006

5 La Jornada newspaper, May 5, 2006

6 La Jornada newspaper, May 8, 2006

7 La Jornada newspaper, May 12, 2006

8 El Sur, June 8, 2006

## Cerezo Committee: New Harassment



Francisco Cerezo with Melanie del Carmen Salgado López and a PBI volunteer, Photo: PBI

May 4, 2006 was not only the day that three thousand police took control in San Salvador Atenco<sup>1</sup>. It was also the day that Melanie el Carmen Salgado López, a student of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) who has independently participated in political and cultural activities within the University, received the first of a series of death threats. The threat was made by an email supposedly from her father, who died six years ago, in which he encourages her to join him<sup>2</sup>. After receiving this threat Melanie contacted Francisco Cerezo Contreras of the Cerezo Committee, a human rights organization that has been accompanied by PBI since 2001, to inform him about what had happened. In the days that followed she received daily threats via her email account, and several times Francisco Cerezo's name appeared with details of the contact she had maintained with him.

On May 8th, Melanie met with Francisco in the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature at 2pm. After discussing the previous days' events, they agreed to meet again at the same place at 4pm. At 3:30pm Melanie checked her email and found a new threat in which Francisco was mentioned once again and there was also a reference to the preliminary investigation that she had submitted the previous day with the Federal District's Attorney General's Office of Justice (PGJDF)<sup>3</sup>.

That same day the Faculty was the scene of several noteworthy occurrences. Moments before starting an assembly to define the actions to be taken in solidarity with the people of San Salvador Atenco, various students noticed that there was a person, later identified as Carlos Eduardo Ortega Martínez, filming them<sup>4</sup>. His video camera was taken from him as well as his cellular phone, his identification and a copy of a financial document from the National Defense and Military Department for his billing expenses<sup>5</sup>. It is worth mentioning that the footage included images of Francisco speaking with Melanie, of Francisco in an assembly, and also of Francisco in Café Villa, an economic project of the Cerezo Committee<sup>6</sup>. On the same day Melanie and Francisco decided that for security reasons it would be better that Melanie move into Francisco's house. From that day onwards PBI increased the accompaniment of Francisco Cerezo, both in his home and in his daily activities.

According to Francisco Cerezo, "the threats against Melanie are related to the Federal Preventative Police (PFP) bursting into the village of Atenco. The other part of this repressive attack is to generate terror amongst organizations and student activists to prevent their support and the reporting of these occurrences. There are more students who

have been threatened or harassed but many of them do not report it, which makes it difficult to document the fact that Melanie's case is not an isolated situation, but rather a repressive plan of the State to inhibit participation in reporting and mobilizing to ensure that those guilty of rape and torture against university students in the Atenco case are punished. The human rights violations that occurred after the attack by the PFP in Atenco also convey a message of terror to all of society. It is intended to prevent a civil mobilization in the case of fraud or discontent caused by the results of the up-coming elections on the 2nd of July. That is to say, apart from inhibiting this mobilization it will also inhibit those who are not currently organized from doing so, because they will be conscious of the fear produced by the occurrences in Atenco. It is well known that student activists and organizations have a tremendous capacity for mobilization and dissemination of situations that occur in Mexico and the repressive attack, threats, monitoring and harassment is directed towards them."<sup>7</sup>

The threats towards Melanie and the events of the 8th May in the UNAM were reported to the Attorney General's Office of the Republic (PGR)<sup>8</sup> on the 9th May 2006 and to date the Attorney General is investigating whether the case falls within its jurisdiction. On the 26th of May, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH) referred a request for information to the State in relation to the situation concerning Melanie and Francisco and also about the measures adopted to investigate the events and to provide protection to the students. The Commission gave 10 days for the State to react.<sup>9</sup>

1 La Jornada newspaper, May 5, 2006 (more information in 'Notes on the Current Situation' of this publication)

2 "Hi. The world out there continues to be horrible, here it's so beautiful, you should join me, I miss you. I know that very soon we will be re-united. Iguel."

3 Urgent Action AU-010-2006 CEREZO, Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd) May 10, 2006

4 La Jornada newspaper, May 9, 2006

5 La Jornada newspaper, May 9, 2006

6 Urgent Action AU-010-2006 CEREZO, Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd) May 10, 2006

7 Francisco Cerezo, June 19, 2006

8 Criminal denouncement AP PGR/DDF/SPE-XI/176906

9 <http://espora.org/comitecerezo/IMG/jpg/CIDH23mayo06>

## AFADEM: Caravan to Mexico City

Since August 2003, PBI has accompanied Tita Radilla Martínez, vice-president of the Association of Relatives of the Detained, Disappeared and Victims of Human Rights Abuses in Mexico (Afadem) in Atoyac de Álvarez, Guerrero. The organization is made up of relatives of those 'disappeared' during Mexico's "Dirty War" (in the 70's and 80's) who have submitted complaints to various authorities of the Mexican justice system for forced disappearances and torture. Among those detailed are the 200 reports submitted to the Special Prosecutor's Office for Social and Political Movements of the Past (Femospp) that have been attributed largely to the Mexican Army.

Femospp was created by the government of Vicente Fox in 2002, who promised in his election campaign to resolve past crimes committed by the Mexican state. Among those included are the massacre of hundreds of students in Mexico City's Tlatelolco Square in 1968, the massacre of students during a march in 1971, also in Mexico City, and the illegal detentions, forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions committed by the state during what is known as the "Dirty War" in the 70's and 80's.

According to a preliminary Femospp report of 840 pages which was secretly leaked and later published by the US newspaper The New York Times in February, from 1970 to 1982 the Mexican Army conducted a "genocide plan" of kidnappings, torture and murder of hundreds

of people suspected of subversion during the Dirty War, and includes the names of those guilty of the crimes.<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that the Attorney General's Office of the Republic (PGR) and the head of Femospp, Ignacio Carrillo Prieto, initially denied the authenticity of the report, a few weeks later they admitted that in fact the document was a rough draft<sup>2</sup> (a 38 page preliminary Femospp report, 'Principle Results'), was selectively distributed in April 2006.)

In February 2006 the head of the PGR, Daniel Cabeza de Vaca, unexpectedly announced that Femospp was going to close on the 15th of April, declaring that the Special Prosecutor had completed its work, even though it had not resolved any of the cases for which it was in charge.<sup>3</sup> He specified that pending preliminary investigations, as well as legal cases opened against those implicated in criminal acts in past decades, would not be frozen or cancelled, but rather that they will be distributed to diverse federal and state entities in order that the respective procedures may continue.<sup>4</sup>

After the news of the closure of Femospp in Mexico, strong criticism was heard from civil society both within and outside the country. Members of Afadem in Atoyac began to plan various activities in protest against the closure.

On April 3rd and 4th, 32 members of Afadem lead by Julio Mata, secretary, and Tita Radilla,

vice-president, and accompanied by two members of PBI, travelled in caravan from Atoyac to Mexico City. The goal of the caravan was to declare its concerns relating to the closure of Femospp and to demand that the Mexican government carries out its promise to investigate and resolve past crimes. After stopping and holding a press conference in Acapulco's main square, the mobilization continued on to Mexico City, reaching the capital late that night.

The following day, activities began with a press conference in the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center (Prodh) in the morning, a protest at 'Los Pinos,' the official Mexican presidential residence, and another protest and press conference in Mexico City's main square in the afternoon with other human rights organizations, including the National Civil Organizations Network "Todos los Derechos para Todos" (TdT) and the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights. At 'Los Pinos' 5 members of Afadem were able to deliver a document to the Secretary of Citizen Liaisons, Arturo Matus Espino, who assured them that he would communicate their concerns to President Fox. In the petition, backed by Afadem and seven other social organizations including the '68 Committee for Democratic Liberties AC, the Diego Lucero Foundation, the Mothers' Committee of the Politically Disappeared of Chihuahua, Daughters and Sons Born in the Storm, the TdT Network, the Mexican Commission and the Prodh Center, the organizations state: "Foreseeing the agitation of an electoral year we demand that concrete measures are taken as soon as possible to protect the information retrieved and systemized by Femospp, both in its judicial inquiries and in its historical investigative work."<sup>5</sup>

*Note: At the beginning of July 2006 Femospp was still in operation and is expected to continue operating until November 2006. The decision regarding its future will be taken by the next administration.*



Afadem members in Mexico city's main square (El Zócalo), Photo: PBI

1 La Jornada newspaper, February 28, 2006

2 La Jornada newspaper, March 14, 2006

3 Proceso, June 12, 2006

4 La Jornada newspaper, March 14, 2006

5 El Sur, April 6, 2006

## Zihuatanejo: Bay in Danger



Erica Rubí Serrano Farías with a PBI volunteer, Photo: PBI

The Zihuatanejo Bay is without doubt one of the most famous and visited tourist destinations in Guerrero. However, according to environmental organizations from the city, a series of tourism development projects and bad management of wastewater are seriously threatening the port's environment.

The Network of Environmental Organizations of Zihuatanejo (ROGAZ) has on various occasions denounced environmental damages that are affecting the bay.

In particular, in the documentary "Zihuatanejo in Danger of Extinction," produced by ROGAZ and the PRODH Center, it is pointed out that the water quality of Zihuatanejo Bay has diminished alarmingly in the last few years. In the Las Salinas Lagoon, the water is a cloudy color, smells foul and a loss in water depth has been registered due to an increase in sediments on the bottom of the lagoon. This is due to the fact that the five wastewater treatment plants in the city have an operating capacity of 170 litres per second, even though production of drinking water in the municipality is 308 litres per second (as was recognized in the Third Report of the Municipal Government 2001-2002). The deficit amounts to approximately 138 litres per second of wastewater that is not treated and is discharged at points that connect directly to the bay and to La Salinas Lagoon. This generates changes and deterioration in water quality and in flora and fauna, as pointed out by the Secretary of Navy in its evaluation of the water quality.

A second highly concerning factor is the construction of a tourism project named "Puerto Mío", which began in 1994 and belongs to property development firm Punta del Mar – Grupo Regina. Puerto Mío consists of an imposing real estate development with hotels, condominiums, villas, commercial areas and a marina with more than 100 berths. Some of the construction of this mega-project has already been completed, serving

as a breakwater with a view to creating a marina with calm water for yachts. The breakwater has modified the natural circulation of ocean currents, which has caused stagnation of the wastewater poured out by the local council and the sedimentation and accumulation of garbage on the ocean floor, shallowing the depth of the bay.

Furthermore, a gas station was built near the breakwater without authorization and the boats directly load fuel without any security measures, resulting in diminished water quality due to the hydrocarbons that spill into the sea. Puerto Mío has also caused the destruction of El Almacén beach, located close to the breakwater, which now practically no longer exists due to the movement of sand and land-filling done by the property developer. Finally, Puerto Mío contributes to the contamination of the bay by pouring out untreated water, notwithstanding that the construction of the complex was conditional upon the installation of its own wastewater treatment plant that has still not been installed.

A further step in the project would be the construction of a bigger wharf for cruise ships (integrated into the structure of the breakwater) so that they can arrive two by two and tourists could disembark without needing the small speedboats of the residents of Zihuatanejo, who currently take them to the port. According to ROGAZ, the structure of the wharf would later impede circulation of the water in the bay, would facilitate the accumulation of sediment and could even cause a gradual disappearance of the bay itself.<sup>1</sup>

In December 2005 the case against the contamination of the bay was admitted to the Latin American Water Tribunal (TLA) which, on March 20, 2006, ruled to "recognize the omissive and negligent conduct of the authorities of SEMARNAT, the CAN and the PROFEPA with respect to their obligations to control potential environmentally degrading activities and to prevent the

environmental impacts in Zihuatanejo Bay."<sup>2</sup>

Ecologists from Zihuatanejo received threats and harassment because of their commitment to defending the environment. On the 26th February 2006, Erica Rubí Serrano Farías, the attorney who previously provided legal assistance and followed the cases of ROGAZ, found a grenade exclusively used by the military in front of her house<sup>3</sup>. This act of intimidation occurred at the same time the case was admitted before the TLA, which Erica Serrano was leading. According to the 'Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez' Human Rights Center, the incident constitutes "a clearly intimidating act against the work of Erica Serrano as a human rights defender, attempting to hold back the work done by ROGAZ during all of these years".<sup>4</sup>

On June 6, 2006 Noé Aguirre, a member of ROGAZ, received telephone threats and at the same time realized that individuals outside of his family store where he was located were watching him. One of those individuals was armed and dressed in Municipal Police uniform<sup>5</sup>. In view of these events "the 'Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez' Human Rights Center declares its concern that threats may continue against members of the Network of Environmental Organizations of Zihuatanejo (ROGAZ), an organization that stands out because of its defense of the Zihuatanejo Bay's environment."<sup>6</sup>

1 Information from audiovisual and written content in the documentary "Zihuatanejo in danger of extinction", produced in Zihuatanejo and Mexico City, a co-production of PRODH / ROGAZ 2005 - 2006

2 <http://www.tragua.com/tla1.html>

3 AU PRODH Center February 24, 2006

4 AU PRODH Center February 24, 2006

5 AU PRODH Center June 9, 2006

6 AU PRODH Center June 9, 2006

## Eviction of teachers from Oaxaca's main square

On May 22nd Enrique Rueda Pacheco, General Secretary of Section 22 of the National Union of Education Workers in Oaxaca, pointed out during a meeting that their suspension of activities was a "demonstration of unity and strength, so that the government meets our demands." The teachers and education assistants had been on strike, protesting and installing themselves in Oaxaca's main square in front of the old government palace and in 56 outlying streets. One million 300 students of different grades from more than 20 thousand schools were left without classes due to the suspension of work. The leader asserted that the teacher's movement is prepared to engage in dialogue, "but that same decision has not been made" in the state government because "up until now there is uncertainty" as to how to respond to their petition. Their principal demand is re-zoning due to a high cost of living caused by Oaxaca being an important tourist state. Such a re-zoning would result in an increase in teacher's wages. He also demanded that attention be given to the fact that education is 20 years behind in the 11 sub-systems due to insufficiencies in basic infrastructure, vacancies for teachers and support staff, among other issues.<sup>1</sup>

On June 14th, after an attempted eviction of the teachers in Oaxaca's main square carried out at night by the state government, Peace Brigades International (PBI) received a call from the Oaxaca Human Rights Network (RODH) seeking their presence in order to verify the human rights situation and security conditions of the civil organizations during that day and those that followed.

On June 18th, two PBI members travelled to Oaxaca City in response to this request. As well as having a presence in the RODH offices and accompanying members of the network to various activities, the members of PBI held meetings with authorities and civil society organizations from Oaxaca.

Sara Méndez Morales, Coordinator of the Oaxaca Human Rights Network, discussed the following themes with us:

### ***What is your assessment of the human rights situation in Oaxaca State?***

It seems to us that the human rights situation in Oaxaca is delicate, and at the moment we have been thrown into a cycle of authoritarian power which wants to silence the dissident voices in the state: the voices of social and civil organizations, of the opposition parties, of the communities which have rebelled against the control of the PRI (the Institutional Revolutionary Party) and of the media.

The 6th Report of the RODH gives detailed descriptions of diverse abuses that occurred during 2005. This year we are seeing that the repression is intensifying. A symptom of this was the attempted eviction of the teacher's strike on June 14th.

### ***What is your interpretation of the events of June 14th?***

Since last year a series of events have occurred which have made one suspect an extensively prepared coup against the teaching profession: the uprise of dissidence within the union which

was encouraged by the state government and accusations of corruption against both the General Secretary Enrique Rueda Pacheco and the First Assistant Alma Delia Santiago. In mid-May of this year a media lynching campaign began prior to the teachers' strike that hadn't occurred in previous years and appeared to be designed to prepare public opinion to legitimize a coup against the leaders. We consider that it was a strategy to strike against the teaching profession due to its clear confrontation against the state government and which now, to a certain extent, appears to be strengthened by popular support. In a few more days we will have the report and we will share it with you.

### ***What activities is the RODH carrying out?***

We are conducting interviews and documenting cases of human rights violations. We have studied the facts of a complaint presented to us and in a few days we will have the report ready.

### ***Why did you deem the presence of PBI necessary at this time?***

Given the conditions of great social instability that broke out in the state we consider that it is important to count on an international presence that will assist in backing up the human rights organizations that have taken on the task of documentation. We asked advice from other people in the field and they recommended that we invite you, and we also had previous contact with you last year. It has been a pleasure to have your presence which has helped to facilitate a process that otherwise would have taken longer.

### ***What scenarios could possibly take place?***

Repression could intensify, which we anticipate would be selective, for example against the media. For now the state government appears inactive due to the great electoral loss it suffered, however once the election results are known we believe that a new wave of repression could begin.

### ***What are the next steps?***

We are putting together a legal strategy that also provides for lobbying on a national and international level.



Sara Méndez Morales with a PBI volunteer, Photo: PBI

<sup>1</sup> La Jornada newspaper May 23, 2006

## Update on PBI Mexico's Activities

### Accompaniments:

- Emiliana y Francisco Cerezo Contreras, members of the Cerezo Committee, in Mexico City and on their trips to visit their brothers in prison.
- The Organization of Women Ecologists of the Sierra de Petatlan (OMESP), in the municipality of Petatlan, Guerrero, and on their visits throughout the state of Guerrero.
- The Organization of the Indigenous People Me'Phaa (OPIM) in the municipality of Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero, and on their trips throughout the state of Guerrero.
- The Center for Human Rights de la Montaña "Tlachinollan", members of the office in Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero, and on their trips throughout the state of Guerrero.
- Tita Radilla Martínez, vice-president of AFADEM (Association of Relatives of the Detained, Disappeared and Victims of Human Rights Abuses) in Atoyac de Álvarez, Guerrero and on her trips throughout the state of Guerrero as well as to Mexico City.

## Public Relations

### Interviews with Mexican Authorities:

*Federal Level:* Dr. Mario Álvarez Ledesma, General Director of Protection of Human Rights of the National Attorney General's Office (PGR); Silverio Tapia Hernández, Coordinator of Advisors of the Deputy Attorney General's Office of Human Rights of the National Attorney General's Office (PGR); Ambassador Miguel Ángel González Félix, General Coordination of Foreign Affairs and Attachés of the National Attorney General's Office (PGR); Rafael Gonzáles Morales, Chief of Inter-institutional Participation of the National Attorney General's Office (PGR); Retired Brigadier General of the Mexican Army Eduardo Alejandro Martínez Aduno, Federal Preventative Police Commissioner (PFP); José Luis Lagunes López, Under Secretary of Prevention of the Department of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SSP); Víctor Hugo Pérez Hernández, Director of Human Rights of the Department of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SSP); Juan Manuel Herrera Marín, Commissioner of the Decentralized Organ of Prevention and Social Re-adaptation of the Department of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SSP); Federico Alejandro Hernández Méndez, General Coordinator of Prevention of the Department of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SSP); Francisco Carrillo Díaz Barriga, Advisor to the Under Secretary of Citizen Prevention of the Department of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SSP); Indira Patricia Hernández León, Assistant Director of Attention of Cases of the Secretary of the Interior (SEGOB); Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández, President Of the National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH); Jorge Ramón Morales Díaz, Head of the Fourth General Examiner's Office of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH); Dr María del Refugio González Domínguez, Under Secretary of Multilateral Affairs of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SRE), Luis Benavides of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SRE); Jorge Uscanga Escobar, President of the Public Security Commission of the Chamber of Deputies; Hugo Flores Zúñiga, National Institute of Migration (INM);

*State Level, in Federal District:* Graciela Rojas Cruz, Liaison for the Strengthening of Government Organizations; Beatriz Cosío Nava, Advisor to the Secretary of Government; Ulises Sandal Ramos Koprivitza, General Director of Human Rights for the Federal District's Attorney's General Office of Justice (PGJDF); Fernando Castillo Díaz, Executive Director of Human Rights of the Department of Public Security (SSP-DF); José Luis Gómez, Assistant Director of Human Rights of the Department of Public Security of the Federal District (SSP-DF); Marco Vinicio Gallardo, Coordinator for the Institutional Strengthening of the European Union-Mac Arthur of the Human Rights Commission (CDHDF); Dolores Martínez, Advisor to the Human Rights Commission (CDHDF);

*In Guerrero:* Commander Ernesto Fernández Cadena, Regional Headquarters of the Federal Preventative Police (PFP); Deputy Ernesto Fidel Payán Cortinas, President of the Commission of Political Affairs of State Congress; Hipólito Lugo Cortes, General Representative of the State Commission for the Defence of Human Rights (CODDEHUM); Gloria Ocampo, Regional Government Representative of the National Institute of Migration in Acapulco (INM).

*Municipal Level: In Chilpancingo:* Lieutenant Antonio Mejía Chávez, Director of Public Security; *In Zihuatanejo:* Commander Leonardo Evangelista Morena, Director of the Judicial Police; Eduardo Enrique Domínguez Maganda, Director of Public Security; *In Petatlán:* Commander Cesar Espinoza Alvarado, Director of the Judicial Police; José Antonio Armenta Miralrío, Municipal President.

*In Oaxaca:* Rosario Villalobos Rueda, Under Secretary of Human Rights of the Executive; Netolín Chávez, Assistant Attorney of Preliminary Investigations of the State Attorney General's Office of Justice; Roberto Rodríguez Mayoral y Abraham Altamirano Magno of the Under Secretary of Civil Protection; Jaime Mario Pérez Jiménez, President of the State Commission of Human Rights of Oaxaca; Naval Lieutenant Manuel Moreno Rivas, Director of the Judicial Police.

### Interviews with International and Mexican Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Experts

*Federal and International Level:*

Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd); Eureka Committee; "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" Human Rights Center (PRODH); Decade Against Impunity Solidarity Network; Amnesty International- Mexican Section.

*State Level:* Network of Environmental Organizations of Zihuatanejo (ROGAZ); The "Dios Único" Church; Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights "José María Morelos y Pavón"; Human Rights Center de La Montaña "Tlachinollan"; "El Sur de Acapulco" newspaper; Leftist's Social Movement (MSI); Popular Democratic Left.

*Oaxaca:*

Oaxacan Network of Human Rights (RODH); "Ojo de Agua"; Services for an Alternative Education (EDUCA); Víctor Raúl Martínez Vázquez of the Autonomous University Benito de Juárez of Oaxaca (UABJO); Enrique Rueda Pacheco of the 22nd Section of the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE).

### Embassies and the United Nations:

Meeting to present the situation of human rights defenders before a delegation of the European Commission; meetings with representatives from the embassies of the Netherlands, Italy, the United States, Ireland, England, Finland, and the European Commission; celebration of the Queen of England's birthday in the residence of the ambassador of the United Kingdom.

### Forums:

*State Level:* Forum "Migrate or Die", organized by the Human Rights Center de la Montaña "Tlachinollan" in Tlapa de Comonfort; Public Assembly of the Collective Campesinos of Pantla.

## PBI celebrates its 25th anniversary

PBI has been promoting non-violence and protecting human rights since 1981. The 25th anniversary this year is the occasion to share our stories, strategies and experiences relating to the non-violent protection of human rights defenders in Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Nepal and Indonesia. Events, conferences and concerts will be organized around the world to celebrate the organization's quarter of a century.

### Conference, July 7-9, Front Royal, Virginia, United States

These three days will allow reflection, focusing in particular on the protection of women's human rights and how to build a global human rights movement, thanks to the facilitation of Steve Rickart, member of "The Soros Foundation" and of the "Open Society Network".

### Delegation to Guatemala, August 8-17, 2006

A special delegation will travel to Guatemala, the first country where PBI began its international accompaniment. The objective will be to study how PBI has developed its non-violent accompaniment in Guatemala and to assess the current human rights situation.

### Publication in Spanish of the book "Unarmed Bodyguards"

This book, which until now only existed in English, gives a theoretical and empirical explanation of the power of non-violent accompaniment and protection as a technique to open spaces for peace in tyrannical and arbitrary situations. It is an indispensable book for those who work in conflict resolution, human rights activists and political science students.

For more information:  
[www.peacebrigades.org](http://www.peacebrigades.org)



PBI Team: Riccardo Carraro (Italy), Hermine Diebolt (France), Anne May (United States), Jamie Wick (United States), Mercedes Cuenca (Spain), Pili Romera (Spain), Marjolein van de Water (Netherlands), Photo: PBI

### Peace Brigades International

PBI is a non-governmental organization that, upon request, maintains international accompaniment teams in conflict areas. The organization's objective is the protection of the political space for individuals and organizations that promote human rights and which, in turn, are under threat of persecution and repression as a consequence of their work. International accompaniment is in this way a conflict transformation tool, through which third parties can contribute in creating the conditions necessary to resolve a conflict peacefully. At no time does PBI attempt to replace Mexican initiatives that promote the respect for human rights, but rather limits itself to supporting such initiatives with the presence of international accompaniment volunteers. To achieve this goal, PBI teams work in-country accompanying those people or organizations under

threat, making periodic visits to conflict zones, distributing information on the conflict's development and maintaining a dialogue with civil and military authorities in an effort to raise international awareness.

**The Information Bulletin** for the PBI Mexico Project is a quarterly publication produced by the team in Mexico. PBI maintains the highest level of objectivity possible thanks to the use of a wide variety of public sources (newspapers, magazines, public reports from civil organizations, etc.), and the citation of all sources used in its articles. The bulletin is distributed both within Mexico and internationally. If you would like to receive the PBI Mexico Project's Information Bulletin, please contact the Project Office in San Francisco or the PBI Team in Mexico.

#### PBI Mexico International Office

One Hallidie Plaza, Suite 402  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Tel: +1-415-986 9020  
E-mail: [pbimexico@peacebrigades.org](mailto:pbimexico@peacebrigades.org)  
[www.peacebrigades.org/mexico-e.html](http://www.peacebrigades.org/mexico-e.html)

#### PBI - Mexico Team

Calle Lerdo 9  
Colonia San Mateo  
Chilpancingo, Gro. - CP 39022  
Tel/Fax: +52-(747)-47-119-62  
E-mail: [pbigro@peacebrigades.org](mailto:pbigro@peacebrigades.org)