

Peace Brigades International

in México

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Notes on the Current Situation

Anniversary of civil resistance against the dam "La Parota"

July 28, 2006 was the three year anniversary of the civil resistance movement against the construction of the hydroelectric project La Parota. During the celebration, organized in Agua Caliente by the Council of Ejidos¹ and Communities Opposed to La Parota (CECOP), the attorney for the opposition movement, Vidulfo Morales from the Center for Human Rights de la Montaña "Tlachinollan", indicated that while court cases are a tool, *"the civil resistance movement of the communities is legitimate when faced with the illegal conduct of the courts."*

A letter proclaiming solidarity from the Emeritus Bishop of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Samuel Ruiz Garcia, was read. The letter emphasized that the communities *"have witnessed a growing national and international solidarity that has been given and received in many ways, from activities developed by the coordinators (of CECOP) which have influenced history, from the resistance and survival of their small communities, and from their local churches and organized groups that maintain a genuine option for life."* During the celebration, at which more than 600 people attended, spokesman Felipe Flores reminded people that on July 28, 2003 the Arroyo Verde, Garrapatas and San José communities set up the first sit-in in El Frailé to oppose the Parota project.²

UN rapporteur Rodolfo Stavenhagen visits Guerrero

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, participated in the International Seminar on Human Rights of Indigenous People in the city of Iguala. Following the seminar, he visited different regions of Guerrero.

On August 10th he met with community members opposing the dam "La Parota".³

On August 11th in San Luis Acatlán he acknowledged that there is tacit recognition of the town's Community Police and proposed that they work very closely with local members of congress to create a law which recognizes them as they were created; *"a law that in one way or another gives official status to the Community Police and integrates them into existing judicial structures, or a law which responds to the plans and needs of the communities and which recognizes the autonomy of the communities in justice and crime prevention."*⁴

The Special Rapporteur also met with members of the Suljaa Collective in Rebellion (Xochistlahuaca) who work at the Nómndaa community radio station (La Palabra del Agua – The Word of Water), who have reported suffering constant harassment by the Mexican army since going on air in December 2004. Rodolfo Stavenhagen said *"I don't know what the army has to do with community radio; this all seems to be very problematic to me and creates a picture of human rights violations (...)"*.⁵

Finally on August 12th, a discussion was held with members of the Regional Coordination of Community Authorities and with indigenous people of the Ayutla municipality who expounded diverse human rights abuses. Orlando Manzanares from the community El Camalote spoke of the sterilization of 14 indigenous people in his community in April 1998. Andrea Eugenio Manuel reported that her sister Otilia has received death threats for supporting indigenous people whose human rights have been violated, and also said that in the Tlapaneca zone where she lives the Mexican army arrives and establishes camps, stealing from the indigenous people what little food they have. Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez indicated that reports have been lodged; complaints have been filed with both the state and federal human rights commissions, but that in many cases they do not respond because the government does not recognize that the army has violated human rights.⁶

International Day of the Disappeared

On August 30, 2006 the Association of Relatives of the Detained, Disappeared and Victims of Human Rights Abuses in Mexico (AFADEM) commemorated the National and International Day of the Disappeared in Atoyac de Álvarez and in Acapulco. During the forum organized in Atoyac, the attorney of the PRODH Center, Luisa Pérez, said that forced disappearances have continued to persist in recent years as a consequence of the impunity in cases that occurred in the seventies. That impunity has led to new cases of disappearances. She said that regarding the military, the Special Prosecutor's Office for Social and Political Movements of the Past *"did not take on the responsibility to prosecute the military; something that can be done."* Mario Solórzano, speaker from the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights indicated that one of the cases expounded to international authorities after exhausting all internal authorities was the case of Rosendo Radilla, father of the vice-president of AFADEM, Tita Radilla.⁷

Presidential Elections

On September 5th the Federal Electoral Tribunal approved the 'Relative Report on the Final Calculation of the Election of the United States of Mexico and the Declaration of Validity of the Election and the President Elect', declaring PAN candidate Felipe Calderón Hinojosa president.

In light of this, the National Civil Organizations Network "Todos Los Derechos Para Todos" (TDT) which coordinates 55 human rights organizations in the country, declared the following⁸: *"Previously the TDT Network proposed that the Electoral Tribunal exercise its powers to give certainty to the electoral results and, in view of the close results and the doubts that were held by a significant portion of the electorate, that there should be a total recount of the votes, which did not occur. (...) To guarantee the accuracy and confidence in the outcome, the Electoral Tribunal had the duty to not limit itself to the mere "symbolic application of resources"⁹, rather it should have investigated "what implies positive conduct in the legislation and to practice the necessary diligence in clarifying the denounced anomalies" which it did not do, thus failing to achieve the obligations of the State in relation to political rights. The report approved by the Electoral Tribunal, despite determining that the impact of the different irregularities and unlawful events is unknown, does not take into account how close the vote was (0.56%) and the probability of a real effect on the electoral results. National Civil Organizations Network "Todos Los Derechos Para Todos" (TDT) laments that the failure of the Federal Electoral Tribunal has not given total certainty to Mexican citizens. What we have experienced during this electoral process raises the need for the new legislature to take immediate measures to carry out reforms in electoral matters that wholly guarantee the political rights of all Mexicans."*

1 An ejido is a cooperative farming community

2 El Sur, July 29, 2006

3 El Sur, August 11, 2006

4 El Sur, August 12 & 13, 2006

5 El Sur, August 12 & 13, 2006

6 El Sur, August 14, 2006

7 El Sur, August 31, 2006

8 http://www.redtdt.org.mx/home/index_01.htm

9 Inter-American Human Rights Commission (Case 10.956 Mexico)

Pablo Alvarado Flores Released

*I am an indigenous Nahuatl and did not know my rights. Thanks to the Cerezo brothers who explained them to me I began to understand what was happening. From the beginning the Cerezo Committee was formed by friends and family who took on my case and began to denounce the situation and fight for my freedom, given that I was a victim of an unjust detention and five years of imprisonment. The Committee managed to take my case along with that of their brothers. Thanks to the work of the Committee a minimum penalty was achieved.*¹

Pablo Alvarado

Pablo Alvarado Flores was arrested in his house on August 13, 2001, in the same operation in which the brothers Alejandro, Héctor and Antonio Cerezo Contreras were arrested. At first his arrest seemed inexplicable to him, given that his main occupation was selling clothes in a market in the State of Mexico, that he didn't have any previous criminal record, and that he was not involved in any activities of a political nature. Subsequently he was informed that he was accused of being an accomplice to the Cerezo brothers in the attack on three Banamex branches in Mexico City using small explosive devices. However, Pablo did not know the brothers prior to his arrest, and saw them for the first time when they arrived at the installations of the National Attorney General's Office (PGR). Months later all of them were sentenced for organized crime. Pablo Alvarado was sentenced to five years of imprisonment and the three Cerezo brothers to seven and a half years. All of them were exonerated of the accusations that resulted in their arrest, which was the planting of the explosive devices. Pablo states that his arrest took place to justify the crimes for which the brothers Alejandro, Héctor and Antonio were accused.² "This crime can't be legally proved with people who are of the same family, so they needed an outsider to keep the brothers in prison longer"³

In March 2005 Alejandro Cerezo was released from prison and acquitted of all charges. Pablo spent four years and eleven months in "El Altiplano"⁴ maximum-security prison until July 2006 when he was transferred for good conduct to the Cefereso Number 4 in Tepic, Nayarit. This prison is located 800 kilometers from Mexico City where his family lives and meant it was impossible for his family to visit him during his last month of imprisonment.⁵

On the day of Pablo's release from prison, August 13th, the Cerezo Committee attended his liberation and PBI accompanied Emiliana and Alejandro Cerezo together with Yolanda Martínez and Azucena Alvarado Martínez, wife and daughter of Pablo, in Tepic, Nayarit, to welcome him. The following day there was a march in Tepic organized by the Nayarit Student's Federation, in which Pablo participated. The Cerezo Committee also undertook various activities in Mexico City: among them, a march commemorating the anniversary of the Cerezo brothers'

imprisonment and afterwards a press conference in the installations of the "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" Human Rights Center.

Currently Pablo is living with his family. "Now I must start from zero again, given that it is not economically possible to do what I was doing before being imprisoned. Further ahead I will see what I can do."⁶



Pablo Alvarado with his family in Nayarit. Photo: PBI

Francisco and Emiliana Cerezo Receive Death Threats

On September 6, 2006, Francisco Cerezo Contreras was home alone when he received a death threat via email addressed to him and, separately, addressed to Emiliana and their brothers in prison. The text of the email addressed to him said: "FRANCISCO THE OLDEST BASTARD IF HE CONTINUES WITH HIS THINGS IT'S GOING TO GO BADLY FOR HIM, SINCE HE HAS ALREADY BEEN ALLOWED TO DO A LOT OF STUPID THINGS BUT THAT WILL STOP IF HE LEAVES THIS CRUEL WORLD SO HE NO LONGER HAS TO SUFFER..." The street in which Francisco and other members of the Cerezo Committee live was also mentioned.⁷ As a result of this threat PBI increased the intensity of Francisco and Emiliana's accompaniment and activated its support network in Mexico by means of a round of urgent meetings with Mexican authorities, the High Commissioner of the United Nations and embassies present in Mexico from Europe, North America and Australia.

PBI considers these threats to be very serious and is concerned for the safety of Emiliana and Francisco Cerezo, given that this is the second critical situation that has occurred this year.⁸ The first situation took place in May 2006 when Francisco Cerezo realized that he was being filmed and watched by agents who were carrying documents from the Secretary of National Defense. On September 11th, Amnesty International transmitted an urgent action in which it was requested that appeals be made to the Mexican government. El

Observatorio (The Observatory), a program in conjunction with the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) also transmitted an urgent action.

"It is obvious that there is a campaign to discredit the work we undertake to defend human rights, which began in May, when we were filmed by a military agent commissioned by the PFP (Federal Preventative Police) and now, not only with this death threat, but also with the press once again accusing my brothers in prison of being in charge of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca, as leaders of the EPR (Popular Revolutionary Army), which is absurd given that in prison they continue to be held incommunicado" says Francisco.⁹

PBI is following the situation very closely and remains concerned about the safety of Francisco and Emiliana Cerezo.

¹ Interview with Pablo Alvarado, PBI, September 26, 2006

² La Jornada, August 26, 2006, Excelsior, August 26, 2006

³ Interview with Francisco Cerezo, PBI, September 26, 2006

⁴ Previously known as "La Palma"

⁵ Urgent Action of the Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights, July 21, 2006

⁶ Interview with Pablo Alvarado, PBI, September 26, 2006

⁷ Urgent Action of the Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd) AU-06-09-06 CEREZO

⁸ Urgent Action AU-010-2006 of the Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd) May 10, 2006

⁹ Interview with Francisco Cerezo PBI, September 26, 2006

Interview with OBTILIA EUGENIO MANUEL from the Organization of the Indigenous People Me'phaa in Ayutla (OPIM)

Since February 2005 PBI has accompanied Obtilia Eugenio Manuel, secretary of the OPIM, her husband Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez and her sister Andrea Eugenio Manuel, in Ayutla de Los Libres and in trips they make to various communities (El Camalote, Barranca de Guadalupe, etc). Their accompaniment began following a death threat and harassment they received for their work in human rights.

Recently we spoke with Obtilia Eugenio Manuel to hear more about the current situation of human rights violations and the OPIM:

What are the principal activities of the organization at present?

The organization has recently initiated a program in which four promoters visit Me'phaa communities to discuss the rights of each one of us; for example, the right to study and the right to live. First the promoters come here to Ayutla to receive training in how to explain these things to the people of the villages and then they visit each village. Cuauhtémoc, Andrea and I do the training in Ayutla. We think about what training we need to give them. The promoters go to the communities, return with information, and then we meet here and talk. The four promoters are from El Camalote, Barranca de Guadalupe, from la Colonia Progreso and la Colonia El Paraíso. They have been working for a year and they do not receive any payment for their work.

We also accompany people to the city hall here in Ayutla. We do translations in the municipal seat of government, in the prosecution department, and in court. We follow up applications in city hall to see if they have been approved.

Also, in the communities we are asked for a lot of information about domestic violence. Indigenous women often do not know their rights.



Obtilia and Andrea Eugenio Manuel with a PBI volunteer in Ayutla de Los Libres. Photo: PBI

Tell us about the situation in the indigenous communities and the current problems.

One of the most serious problems is happening in the communal lands. The land is not measured or marked, but each person knows their land and where they plant. Now the government says that each person must measure and divide their land in order to have ownership. When they began to divide the land problems started and there were deaths. People believe that the government wanted these problems and wanted us to fight amongst ourselves. They say that we are the ones fighting, but it is the government who provokes the confrontations.

The government does not respect the needs and pleas of indigenous communities. For example, there are not enough doctors. In Tecruz and Barranca de Guadalupe you have to walk for two hours to reach a doctor. There are many illnesses, fevers and sometimes one can't get to a doctor. We have the right to health services but that's no good if the doctor is far away and there is no medicine. Also there are

no teachers. For example, in Barranca de Guadalupe there is only one teacher for three groups of students. In total there are two teachers for six groups. Other problems we have are inadequate housing, a lack of public works, and our rights in general are not respected.

Another major problem that we have is that there are military personnel everywhere who set up checkpoints on the roads and search pick-ups and ask to see identification. They scare us because they know that we can't demand our rights, that we are indigenous people and sometimes we don't know our rights. They also scare us because they carry weapons.

At the moment has the organization, or you, been receiving threats or other kinds of harassment?

Yes, they are still following, spying on me and my children, and harrasing indigenous communities. I am afraid but I am not going to leave the organization, I have to keep going so that they respect us as indigenous people. We are going to carry on.

Radio Ñomndaa, the first community radio station in Guerrero

In July 2006 two members of the PBI team in Chilpancingo visited Xochistlahuaca to meet with members of Radio Ñomndaa. The municipality is located in La Costa Chica Montaña region in the southwest of the state of Guerrero, close to the northern border of the state of Oaxaca.

On December 20, 2004, Radio Ñomndaa, the first community radio station in the state of Guerrero, began broadcasting. As well as being the first community radio station, Radio Ñomndaa, or 'The Word of Water', is the first radio station in Mexico that broadcasts in the Amuzgo language.



Members of the Suljaa' Collective in Rebellion. Photo: PBI

The project is the result of more than two years of efforts. It was created when the Amuzgo indigenous people from the Xochistlahuaca municipality (or Suljaa in their language) declared their municipality autonomous in 2002 in order to be governed by their own traditional authorities. The members of the Suljaa Collective in Rebellion saw a radio project as an important way of preserving their existence as an indigenous village in the region, as a space in which to preserve their own identity, culture and traditions.

In its two years 'The Word of Water' has grown to such an extent that it now plays a vital role in the community. In the municipality of Xochistlahuaca, 95% of the population speaks Amuzgo as their mother tongue and 71% of the population only speaks this language¹. The radio is "for them, without a doubt an important achievement by the Amuzgo communities."² However, it is not only the Amuzgo community that listens, but also Mixteca, mestizo and afro-mexican communities throughout the region. The radio station has diverse programs, and as well as broadcasting in Amuzgo, some of the programs are translated into Spanish. As in many regions of Mexico, in Xochistlahuaca, where the PRI has governed for decades, there are people from the different political parties. David Valtierra, one of the radio committee members, affirmed that the state's political parties have divided the community, and for this reason one of the goals of "The Word of Water" is to unite the people. He added that many people who listen to the programs belong to different parties and

above all, are very poor individuals. Many of them cannot read or write, but by listening to the radio they can be informed and communicate with others. With its programs, the radio station wants to contribute to the improvement of community life.

Broadcasting begins at 6 in the morning and ends at 4pm or later, depending on the season. The station features many programs covering a wide range of themes; among others, there are programs aimed at young people, children and women. "Looking After the Land", "Stories, Biographies and Legends", "Our Health" and "For the Villages and Roads of the South" are some of the programs that are transmitted every week. The two members responsible for the program "Women for Xochistlahuaca" spoke about their broadcast: The program focusses on issues for women, although it is also interesting for the men of the community. It attempts to remember traditional Amuzgo customs, how they lived in the past, and to trace the evolution of their customs and other changes which have occurred, in order to preserve their culture and language. The community is very concerned because it is losing its customs; between the young and old there are many differences and the program attempts to point out these differences. Themes such as clothing, food, and traditional beliefs are presented, as well as speaking about illnesses, living conditions and the marginalization of women and how their conditions can be improved. Those responsible for the program explained how it has helped the community. For example, many women now know their rights and can speak openly

about their experiences.

In its nearly two years of existence, Radio Ñomndaa has been threatened by federal authorities "for being considered a threat to the security of the state."³ Despite the fact that in the Constitution of the United States of Mexico "it is established that the authorities have the obligation to establish conditions so that indigenous communities can acquire, operate and administer media" there does not exist a law that permits community radio as such⁴. In its first week of broadcasting in 2004, federal authorities arrived at its installations in order

"to threaten the operators, who were told they were working on the margins of the law and that their worksite would be closed."⁵ In January 2005, the traditional authorities of Xochistlahuaca reported harassment by the Mexican army, by the Secretary of Communications and Transport (SCT) and by state civil servants against the radio station⁶. After the visit of three inspectors from the General Communication Route of the SCT Center, during which they threatened to intervene upon the installations of the community radio, the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center, in conjunction with the Center for Human Rights de la Montaña "Tlachinollan", released an urgent action⁷. Members of the radio station committee added that in addition to these harassments, they have also received threats by telephone and have been watched by elements of the state. They highlighted that on three distinct occasions small planes have flown low over the station to take photographs and intimidate them.

1 Communiqué from the traditional authorities and from the Suljaa radio committee, January 25, 2005

2 Ibid

3 La Jornada, January 17, 2005

4 Proposition with Agreement Point <http://gaceta.diputados.gob.mx/Gaceta/Proposiciones/d/prop09.html>

5 La Jornada, January 17, 2005

6 La Jornada, January 27, 2005

7 Urgent Action, January 28, 2005

The Organization of Women Ecologists of the Sierra de Petatlán continues to grow in the Sierra

The Organization of Women Ecologists of the Sierra de Petatlán (OMESP), which was founded with the goals of reforesting the Sierra, conserving wildlife and implementing productive projects, continues to grow in terms of numbers of members, activities and work zones. The following figures reveal some of this growth: in 2003 alone members of the OMESSP planted 146,400 trees; in 2004 they planted another 30,000 as well as developing productive garden vegetable projects by means of sowing pumpkin,

cucumber, carrots, cabbage and other agricultural products; in 2005 they initiated a savings bank and an iguana sanctuary in El Zapotillal, as well as an enclosure for family vegetable gardens.

When the organization was founded in 2000 there was a total of 60 women and there are now over 90 women participating. Men do not participate in a direct manner however they also support the work that the women are doing in the Sierra.

Another example of the growth of the organization is the new women's group from La Pasión community, located 2 hours further up the mountain from El Zapotillal. Celsa Valdovinos and her husband Felipe Arreaga began a project in which they give assistance to other communities concerning reforestation, as well as how to seek government support. As a result of this work, at the beginning of 2006 a new women's group began for those interested in implementing garden vegetable projects, and in the future, raising free-range chickens. There are a total of 10 women who come from nearby communities who have to walk several kilometers through ravines, often in rain, and carrying small children. However, despite these difficulties they are women who are raising awareness of the importance of a community that produces its own food and ceases to be a purely consuming community; of the importance of good family alimentation which includes products from the vegetable garden; of the importance of coming together and organizing themselves to look after and defend the land. Their land, which is the source of life for them, their children and future generations.



Felipe Sánchez Arreaga and Celsa Valdovinos Ríos in La Pasión. Photo: PBI

Civilian Observation Mission in Oaxaca

Since the 22nd of May teachers in Oaxaca have maintained a sit-in in the center of Oaxaca City to request a solution to several demands to the state government relating to the improvement of work conditions. On June 14th, there was an attempted eviction of the teachers' sit-in by means of an operation involving police from diverse state bodies. The attempted eviction failed and, as a result of the police actions, the teachers' movement grew, transforming into a broader catalyst for protest and social demands of the Oaxacan society. Finally on June 20th, this broad protest movement became the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), a movement that includes the participation of diverse social sectors. Their central demand is the ousting of governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz from the state government.¹

The federal government opened a mediation table that was attended by representatives of Section 22 of the National Union of Education Workers as well as representatives of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), with the aim of reaching a peaceful solution to the teachers' strike and social unrest in the state.² Monday September 4, members of 16 organizations³, both Mexican and international, met in Oaxaca City to begin working on the "Civilian Observation Mission in Oaxaca." This mission, an initiative of the National Civil Organizations Network "Todos Los Derechos Para Todos y Todas" (TDT) and the Oaxaca Human Rights Network (RODH), had as its objective to

outline the reality in which the people of Oaxaca State live, and to document human rights violations. At the request of the Oaxaca Human Rights Network, two PBI volunteers were present for the entire week and accompanied different members of the RODH during its observation activities as a mechanism to guarantee their safety. During that time they also met with authorities from different entities within the state government.

The mission focused on three areas of work: the condition of detainees, the people's security situation, and the climate of intimidation. During the entire week those participating in the mission interviewed leaders of the APPO and the teachers' organization, people in solidarity with the movement and family members, and especially those who had suffered threats and harassment. They were able to visit prisons and compile testimonies of those detained. They also had access to testimonies, previously compiled by members of the Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limeddh). The results of their work can be found in a preliminary report⁴; the definitive report will be released soon.

The present situation in Oaxaca continues to be concerning. On Wednesday September 20, the mediation table between the government and the APPO ended without any agreement being met, nor was a date set to resume talks. The state government is requesting the intervention of federal forces to resolve the conflict and, according to testimony of various civil

organizations and community Authorities from Oaxaca State, movements of the Federal Preventative Police (PFP) and of Mexican army troops have already been reported. For its part, the APPO has also been criticized for some of its actions which have violated human rights and because some members of the movement are becoming violent and radical.⁵

1 Communiqué from the RODH "Appeal to the International Community to stop the violence in Oaxaca State" August 24, 2006

2 Communiqué Oaxaca OACNUDH (United Nations High Commission for Human Rights Mexico Office) September 8, 2006

3 Organizations that form part of the Mission: Peace Watch Switzerland (PWS), International Service for Peace (SIPAZ), National Civil Organizations Network "Todos Los Derechos Para Todos y Todas", the Oaxaca Human Rights Network, Christian Association for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT), 'Fray Bartolomé de las Casas' Human Rights Center, 'Fray Francisco de Vitoria' Human Rights Center, 'Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez' Human Rights Center, 'Nu'u ji Kandii' Human Rights Center, 'Flor y Canto' Indigenous Rights Center, the Center of Ecumenical Studies, 'Bartolomé Carrasco Briseño' Regional Human Rights Center A.C., 'Mahatma Gandhi' Regional Human Rights Commission, The Human Rights Program of the Technological Institute of Superior Studies of the West (ITESO), Tequio Legal A.C.

4 <http://www.redtdt.org.mx/home/noticias/informes/2006/septiembre/inf000002Anexo-1.pdf>

5 El Proceso, September 24, 2006: 'The Oaxacan Mirror' Jesús Cantú.

Update on PBI Mexico's Activities

Accompaniments:

- Emiliana and 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 states 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 Alvarez, Guerrero, and on her trips throughout the state of Guerrero as well as to Mexico city.
- Short Term Accompaniment: The Human Rights Network of Oaxaca in Oaxaca City, Oaxaca

Public Relations

Interviews with Mexican Authorities

Federal Level: Eugenia Díez Hidalgo, Head of the Secretary of the Interior's Unit for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (SEGOB); Rodrigo Espeleta, Director of Investigations and Attention to Cases of the Secretary of the Interior's Unit for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (SEGOB); Carlos Garduño Salinas, Coordinator of Advisors of the General Director's Office of Human Rights of the National Attorney General's Office's (PGR); Minister Rodrigo Labardini, General Director of Human Rights of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SRE); José Ignacio Martín del Campo Covarrubias of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SRE); Luz García Rivas, Director of International Affairs of the Secretary of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SPP); Víctor Hugo Pérez Hernández, Director of Human Rights of the Secretary of Public Security and Citizen Protection (SPP); Dr Javier Moctezuma Barragán, Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH); Aleksí Asatashvili, Director of International NGOs; Hugo Flores Zúñiga, National Institute of Migration (INM).

State Level, in the Federal District: Ulises Sandal Ramos Koprivitz, General Director of Human Rights for the Federal District's Attorney General's Office of Justice (PGJDF); Emilio Álvarez Icaza Longoria, President of the Human Rights Commission; Dr Francisco José Díaz Casillas, Under Secretary of Citizen Participation and Crime Prevention of the Secretary of Public Security (SSPDF).

In Guerrero: Juan San Román Ortiz, Director of the Secretary of the Interior; Gloria

Ocampo, Regional Government Representative of the National Institute of Migration in Acapulco (INM).

Municipal Level, in Ometepe: Edgar Evaristo Rodríguez, Director of Public Security, Oscar Juevas Ramírez and Gretel Dávila Vargas of the Regional Delegation of the Commission for Human Rights (Coddehum); Víctor Parra Catalán, Director of the Ministerial Police; Juan Rivera Altamirano. In Xochistlahuaca: Agricultural / Ejido Authorities. In Ayutla: José Trinidad Zamora Roja, Commander of the Ministerial Police; Santos Lozano Reyes, Director of Public Security. In Tlapa: Commander Tomás Herrera Basurto, Director of the Ministerial Police. In Atoyac: Juan Adame Torres, Commander of the Ministerial Police.

In Oaxaca: Rosario Villalobos Rueda, Under Secretary of Human Rights of the Executive Power; Roberto Rodríguez Mayoral, Coordinator of Legal Affairs of the Secretary of Civil Protection; Abraham Altamirano Magno and Patricia López Cruz from the Secretary of Civil Protection; Alberto García Santos, Chief of the Department of Legal Affairs of the Secretary of Public Security, Gladis Ojera Manzanos, Legal Affairs of the Secretary of Civil Protection, Juan Rodríguez Ramos, Attorney General's Office of Justice.

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

Federal and International Level:

Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights (Limedd); 'Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez'

Human Rights Center (PRODH); Civil Movement for Democracy (MCD); Lawyers for Justice and Democracy; Civic Alliance; Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.

State Level: Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights "José María Morelos y Pavón"; Human Rights Center de la Montaña "Tlachinollan"; Guerrero Network of Civil Human Rights Organizations; Radio Ñomndáa; Emiliano Zapata Southern Revolutionary Agrarian League (LARSEZ); "Planting Hope" Human Rights Committee, La Voz de los Sin Voz (The Voice of Those Without a Voice), Jesús Ochoa.

Oaxaca: Oaxaca Human Rights Network (RODH), Regional Human Rights Center "Bartolomé Carrasco Biseño" (BARCA).

Embassies and the United Nations

Meetings with representatives from the embassies of the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, United States of America, Ireland, United Kingdom, Finland, Belgium, Canada, Australia, delegation of the European Commission and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Forums:

State Level: Third Anniversary of the Civil Resistance Movement against the dam "La Parota" in Agua Caliente; International Day of the Disappeared in Atoyac; International Seminar on the Human Rights of Indigenous Communities in Iguala; 11 Year Commemoration of Aguas Blancas.

Security Workshops 2006

Since 2002 PBI has given security workshops to human rights defenders in the Federal District, Oaxaca and Chilpancingo. These workshops are the responsibility of the PBI European Training Office team in Brussels (BEO). In light of the interest demonstrated by participating organizations in improving their own security and receiving additional training, PBI again organized workshops to revise and strengthen the implementation of content given on previous occasions.

PBI also met with organizations interested in receiving training specific to security that had not previously participated in this type of workshop.

From September 4th to 9th, two workshops were organized in the city of Chilpancingo, Guerrero:

-From September 4th to 6th, the first security workshop for organizations that had not received any prior training

-From September 7th to 9th, the second security workshop for individuals and/or organizations with previous training.

These workshops are based on the Manual for Security and Protection for Human Rights Defenders, written by Enrique Eguen in conjunction with PBI BEO and published by Front Line. Specialist Marie Caraj, from the Training team of the BEO, led the workshops. The sessions were intense but beneficial for all of the participating organizations.

For more information on PBI security workshops visit the web page: www.protectionline.org



Participants of the security workshop in Chilpancingo. 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.

PBI Team: Riccardo Carraro (Italy), Anne May (United States), Jamie Wick (United States), Mercedes Cuenca (Spain), Pili Romera (Spain), Marjolein van de Water (Netherlands), Alexander Blessing (Germany)

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.

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