



Continúan agresiones a defensores de derechos humanos de Ayutla

- **Inés Fernández Ortega's daughter is threatened and Raúl Hernández receives a threatening message.**
- **Members of the OFPM are attacked**

Tlapa, Guerrero, 2 September 2010. Four days after Raúl Hernández was released having proved his innocence, the Coordinator of the Collective Management Committee of the Organisation for the Future of Mixtec Peoples (OFPM), Álvaro Ramírez Concepción, was attacked with firearms by eight men who arrived at Jorge Luis García Catarino's plot of land. The latter is a beneficiary of *provisional measures* granted by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

The attack took place on the evening of Monday 30th and lasted approximately 20 minutes. The victim's brother, Audencio Ramírez Concepción, Ambrosio García Catarino and Ramón García Guadalupe were also injured in the attack. It is not known in which direction the attackers fled as the injured were aided by people from Juquila community in Ayutla de los Libres municipality, where the victims live.

The routes out of the village were blocked and Álvaro had to remain in his house, bleeding, until his friends managed to clear the road with picks and sticks in order to take him this morning to Ayutla General Hospital. At present, the doctors report that his condition is stable but serious, given that he received various bullet wounds, two of which were particularly serious; one in the back and another in the top of his leg.

At Tlachinollan Human Rights Centre we have requested that the State Department of Public Security offer protection to the members of the OFPM who are receiving treatment in Ayutla General Hospital, because given the atmosphere of impunity there are no guarantees that the attackers won't return to kill them. This attack is part of a pattern of attacks against indigenous human rights defenders who are in a completely vulnerable situation in spite of the fact that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has granted provisional measures to 108 human rights defenders from the Indigenous Me'phaa People's Organisation (OPIM), Inés Fernández, Valentina Rosendo, Tlachinollan and the families of Raúl Lucas Lucía and Manuel Ponce Rosas.

On Saturday 28th August, one of Inés Fernández's daughters was threatened once again by people who attempted to abduct her as she was walking through the centre of Ayutla. When they threatened her, they referred to Raúl Hernández, who for this reason has had to cancel public activities related to his release and adopt extraordinary security measures.

We firmly condemn the attack against the coordinator of the Collective Management Committee of the OFPM and those accompanying him. Equally, we express our concern regarding the threat directed at the daughter of Inés Fernández Ortega and Raúl Hernández Abundio. These reprehensible acts again demonstrate that in Guerrero there are no guarantees for human rights defenders, especially those who form part of indigenous organisations such as the OFPM and the OPIM, whose efforts to get organized and demand dignified living conditions for their communities continue to be blocked by State and non-State agents or criminalised. At Tlachinollan we believe that occurrences such as those reported today are motivated by the impunity that has prevailed regarding previous violations against human rights defenders from the OPIM and the OFPM. When such occurrences are not investigated, repetition is encouraged. Neither the state security forces nor the presence of the Army in the region have been able to detain this spiral of violence and guarantee the basic conditions necessary for the indigenous peoples to live in peace.

It is clear that the attack suffered by members of the OFPM and the threats against Inés Fernández's daughter and Raúl Hernández Abundio are aimed at stopping the work of human rights defenders in Ayutla and ensuring that those responsible for the crimes are not punished. We reiterate our demand that the competent authorities carry out an exhaustive, serious and swift investigation to identify the whereabouts of those responsible and finish with the impunity. Similarly, we once again demand that the provisional measures ordered by the Court are fully and diligently complied with because this has not been the case to date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Álavro Ramírez was arrested on 6th June 2010 by agents of the Ministerial Investigative Police (Policía Investigadora Ministerial, PIM) when he was walking through the town square in Ayutla with his 10 year old daughter. His arrest was carried out with a warrant issued by the First Instance Judge from this city, Alfredo Sánchez Sánchez. However, on Saturday 12th June, Álvaro Ramírez was released because of the lack of evidence against him.

The OFPM is a sister-organisation of the OPIM, both of which have been struggling since 1998 to make it possible to demand their rights as peoples and denounce serious human rights violations committed by the Mexican Army, since the El Charco massacre. In this context, two of its leaders were forcibly disappeared and murdered. The cases of Raúl Lucas Lucía and Manuel Ponce Rosas are a clear example of how the attackers are protected and the human rights defenders are left completely vulnerable.