

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 03/06 (AMR 41/002/2006, 4 January 2006) Fear for safety/possible prisoner of conscience

MEXICO **Martin Barrios Hernández (m), coordinator of the Human and Labour Rights Commission of Tehuacán Valley (Comisión de Derechos Humanos y Laborales del Valle de Tehuacán)**

A judge has ruled that human rights defender Martín Barrios Hernández must face trial on charges of blackmail, after a 4 January hearing. He will remain in custody and will not be eligible for release on bail while he faces these charges, as blackmail is a serious criminal offence in the State of Puebla. Amnesty International believes that his arrest and prosecution may be an attempt to prevent him carrying out his legitimate human rights work.

Martin Barrios was arrested on 29 December by the judicial police in the municipality of Tehuacan.

Defence lawyers and human rights organizations in Puebla are now considering how to proceed on the case.

No further action is requested from the UA network. We would like to thank all of you who were able to send appeals at such short notice, at what was a critical stage of the legal process. Amnesty International will continue to monitor developments closely, and take further campaigning action as necessary.