

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

MEXICO

Miguel Angel Casillas Báez (m), his family and other journalists of the newspaper, Diario de los Altos

Miguel Angel Casillas, editorial director of local newspaper, Diario de los Altos, was threatened on 18 March by a man claiming to be an official in charge of the Zetas' department (a notoriously criminal organization responsible for hundreds of murders). The threat was made because Miguel Angel Casillas and the newspaper he works for have given critical coverage to a dam development project in el Zapotillo, Los Altos region, Jalisco state.

On 18 March, Miguel Angel Casillas received an anonymous call on his mobile from a man saying "We know who you are, where you live, where you go, who your family are and we want to know how you are going to cooperate with us" (sabemos quién es usted, sabemos dónde vive, sabemos cómo se mueve, sabemos quién es su familia y queremos saber cómo piensa colaborar con nosotros). The caller insinuated that he was acting on the behalf of a politician who wished to damage Miguel Angel Casillas and added that "from this point on you and your family are at risk" (corre peligro a partir de ahora, usted y su familia).

The day before receiving the anonymous phonecall, Miguel Angel Casillas noticed that both his personal email and that of the newspaper he works for had been hacked. The hackers had left a message stating that "Today the email of the newspaper has been kidnapped. Careful what you publish we don't want to hurt anyone. Regards from Jalisco State Congress, from a friend that likes you a lot and is watching anxiously over you. Rightist Jalisco". (Hoy el secuestro fue del correo electrónico del medio cuidado con lo que publican no queremos lastimar a nadie. Saludos desde el congreso de Jalisco de un amigo que te quiere mucho y te vigila con ansias de encontrarte. Yunque Jalisco)

Miguel Angel Casillas has submitted a official complaint with the Jalisco State Public Prosecutor's Office and the State Human Rights Commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project to build el Zapotillo dam in Jalisco state on the Rio Verde has led to concern among local communities, particularly those of Temacapulín, Palmarejo and Acasico which will be flooded. Despite previous commitments by the state government to consult the public on the project, the Diario de los Altos and local human rights organizations have been critical of the project and the failure of the authorities to consult adequately with local communities or provide reliable and detailed information on impact and compensation packages.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- calling for safety measure to be provided for Miguel Angel Casillas Báez, his family and other journalists at the Diario de los Altos and for protection measures to be implemented in accordance with their wishes;
- call on the authorities to instigate a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into the email and telephone threats against Miguel Angel Casillas, including any possible links to local politicians, for the results to be made public and for those responsible to be held to account;

- calling on the authorities to fulfil their obligations under the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and ensure that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Jalisco

Emilio González Márquez
Gobernador del Estado de Jalisco
Palacio de Gobierno,
Av. Corona No. 31, Planta Baja
Col. Centro
Guadalajara C.P. 44100
Estado de Jalisco
MÉXICO

Fax: (+52 33) 36 48 1601/02
Email: emilio.gonzalez@jalisco.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Governor/ Señor Gobernador

Attorney General of Jalisco

Lic. Tomás Coronado Olmos
Procurador del Estado de Jalisco
Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado
Calle 14 no. 2567
Colonia Zona Industrial
Guadalajara, C.P. 44940
Estado de Jalisco
MÉXICO

Salutation: Dear Attorney/ Señor Procurador

Minister of Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso,
Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc,
México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5093 3414
E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Salutation: Señor Secretario/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Human Rights organization

Instituto Mexicano Para el Desarrollo Comunitario (IMDEC), A.C
A.C. Pino 2237-A, Col. del Fresno, Guadalajara, Jalisco C.P 44900
Mexico

Human Rights Commission of Jalisco

Lic. Felipe de Jesús Álvarez Cibrián, Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Jalisco,
Pedro Moreno No. 1616, Col. Americana, Guadalajara C.P. 44160, Estado de Jalisco, MÉXICO , Fax: (+52 33) 36 69 11 01, Salutation: Dear President/ Señor Presidente

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 May.