

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

21 September 2005

MEXICO

**Teodoro Pérez Pérez (m)
Members of his family**

Teodoro Pérez Pérez, an indigenous tsotsil man from Yabteclúm, in the municipality of Chenalhó, Chiapas State, has been reportedly intimidated by two police officers from the State Police (*Policía Sectorial*). The intimidation is believed to be linked to a torture complaint submitted to the State Prosecutor's Office (*Fiscalía General del Estado*). Amnesty International is concerned for his safety, and that of his family.

On 19 June, a drunken man threw a bottle at a building adjacent to the police station in Yabteclúm. Members of the State Police came out of their building after hearing the noise. Despite Teodoro Pérez Pérez reportedly not being involved, he was detained by members of the State Police and forced into the police station. Teodoro Pérez Pérez was allegedly beaten up and had hot water thrown onto his chest. According to his testimony, he was also forced to undress and then threatened with rape. Teodoro Pérez Pérez was released the following morning without charge. He then filed a complaint with the State Prosecutor's Office and notified a local human rights organization.

Since late August, two uniformed officers from the State Police have reportedly gone to Teodoro Pérez Pérez's house on three occasions whilst he was at work. They have questioned his wife about his whereabouts, but refused to identify themselves or give the reasons why they were looking for him. Amnesty International is concerned that these incidents are intended to intimidate Teodoro and his family and deter him from pursuing his complaint. Teodoro Pérez Pérez has notified the State Prosecutor's Office about the visits. However there are no reports that they have taken any precautionary measures to ensure his safety and that of his family, or investigated the police involved.

In June, Amnesty International also received reports of another incident involving the State Police in Yabteclúm. Another man was forcibly detained and allegedly tortured by two officers who made him go into a van then beat him up, apparently in order to extract information. One of the police officers involved was also reportedly implicated in the detention and alleged torture of Teodoro Pérez Pérez.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture and ill-treatment are widespread in Mexico. Amnesty International has documented many cases where detainees face torture as punishment or to make them confess crimes. Allegations of torture can only be investigated by the prosecutors' offices, even though the alleged torturers, such as judicial police, may be officials working at the prosecutors' offices. Witnesses and complainants are thus open to intimidation, and the torturers almost always escape prosecution.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Teodoro Pérez Pérez and his family, following his detention, reported torture, and intimidation by two officers from the state police (*Policía Sectorial*) in the municipality of Chenalhó, Chiapas State;
- calling on the authorities to ensure his safety and that of his family and to guarantee his right to pursue his complaint against the police without fear of reprisal;
- calling for a prompt, full and impartial investigation into the reported torture of Teodoro Pérez Pérez, for the findings to be published and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- reminding the authorities their obligations to prohibit torture and ill-treatment under the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to follow the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of Chiapas

Mariano Herrán Salvatti
Fiscal General de Justicia del Estado de Chiapas
Libramiento Norte s/n
Infonavit el Rosario
Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, México
Fax: + 52 961 616 5724
Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador

Governor of Chiapas

Pablo Salazar Mendiguchía
Gobernador del Estado de Chiapas
Palacio de Gobierno del Estado de Chiapas
Av. Central y Primera Oriente
Colonia Centro, C.P. 29009
Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, México
Fax: + 52 961 612 5618/612 9189
Salutation: Dear Governor/Señor Gobernador

Director of Human Rights – Interior Ministry

Dr. Ricardo Sepúlveda
Secretaría de Gobernación
Reforma 99, PISO 21, PH
Colonia Tabacalera
C.P. 06030, México D.F. México
Fax: + 52 55 51 28 02 34 (if someone answers say: "tono de fax, por favor")
Salutation: Dear Sir/Estimado Doctor

COPIES TO:

Human Rights NGO

Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas
Brasil # 14 Barrio Mexicanos
CP 29240, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, México
Fax: +52 967 6783551 (if someone answers say: "tono de fax, por favor")

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 2 November 2005