

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER SHOT AT, RISK REMAINS

A human rights defender survived an attempted shooting on 16 October in San Felipe del Agua, Oaxaca State, Mexico. There is grave fear for his security and that of his family.

Leader of the Organization of Indigenous Zapotec People (Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas Zapotecos, OPIZ), **Juan Sosa Maldonado**, was shot at by unidentified men on a motorcycle while driving his children to school on 16 October. Juan Sosa Maldonado's wife was also in the car. No one was hurt as he narrowly escaped being shot when dodging a pothole with his car. This caused one of the gun shots to impact the driver's head restraint. It is thought that the shot was aimed at Juan Sosa Maldonado. A criminal investigation has been opened by the Oaxaca public prosecutor's office.

A complaint was filed with the Oaxaca Human Rights Ombudsman (Defensoría de los Derechos Humanos del Pueblo de Oaxaca), which has now issued a request for Protection Measures (Medidas Cautelares) for Juan Sosa Maldonado, however, neither he nor his family have as yet received protection. The Mechanism for Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (Mecanismo de Protección para Personas Defensoras y Periodistas) has also been informed of the incident but has yet to take any action.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging authorities to provide immediate and effective protection to Juan Sosa Maldonado and his family;
- Calling for a thorough investigation into the attack against Juan Sosa Maldonado and his family on 16 October;
- Reminding them of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 DECEMBER 2013 TO:

Governor of Oaxaca State

Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo
Plaza de la Constitución, Centro
Histórico, C.P. 68000,
Oaxaca de Juárez, México
Fax: +52 95 1501 8100, and dial ext.
40068 (ask "tono de fax, por favor")
Email: spagoboaxaca@gmail.com
Salutation: Dear Governor

Minister of the Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong
Secretario de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, col. Juárez, C.P. 6600,
México D.F., México,
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414 (keep trying)
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Local NGO

Consortio para el Dialogo Parlamentario
y la Equidad
Email:
contacto@consorciooaxaca.org.mx

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Juan Sosa Maldonado was the victim of temporary disappearance during the 1990s and was also imprisoned but later released. Since then he has led an organization which campaigned for the release of Indigenous people in Loxicha, Oaxaca State, scores of whom were arrested and accused of common crimes in 1997 after the appearance of the Popular Revolutionary Army (Ejercito Popular Revolucionario).

Threats, intimidations and attacks to human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico happen frequently. Investigations almost never result in the perpetrators facing justice, and this creates a climate of impunity and insecurity.

The Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists was unanimously approved by both houses of Mexico's parliament, and signed by the president, in 2012. The process for implementing the law is ongoing, including the direct participation of representatives of civil society. However, the mechanism has yet to function effectively for all those who have sought protection. Operational protocols, binding commitments of federal and state-level institutions to comply with protection orders, resources and high-level political support are all urgently needed to guarantee its effectiveness. It is vital that the authorities do not assume that their responsibilities are restricted to establishing a protection mechanism.

Amnesty International has welcomed the establishment in law of the mechanism for the protection of human rights defenders and journalists. Nevertheless, many of the defenders and journalists at risk who have sought protection measures to date have not received a timely or effective response. The mechanism is far from being operational and effective. Lack of financial resources and adequate staff, are some of these deficiencies. Others identified are: Investigations into attacks on defenders and journalists remain gravely deficient, including the special federal prosecutor for crimes against journalists. Virtually no one has been brought to justice. And, the underlying causes that have led to attacks on journalists and defenders, which often involve state and municipal authorities, are almost never investigated or resolved.

Name: Juan Sosa Maldonado (m) and his family

Gender m/f: both

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