

URGENT ACTION

LGBT ACTIVIST KILLED IN HOMOPHOBIC ATTACK

Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera, leading LGBT activist in Guerrero has been killed in what appears to have been a homophobic attack. Other members of the gay pride organization he worked with and other LGBT activists may be at risk of attack.

On 4 May, **Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera**, Director of the Centre for Study and Projects on Integrated Human Development (*Centro de Estudios y Proyectos para el Desarrollo Humano Integral, CEPRODEHI*), was attacked and killed in Chilpancingo, the capital of Guerrero State, southern Mexico by unknown assailants. Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera was apparently walking home after spending the evening socializing.

Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera was an outspoken advocate of LGBT rights. He and his colleagues organized an annual Gay Pride and diversity march in Chilpancingo every June. He and other CEPRODEHI staff had received death threats via the telephone in previous years warning them not to hold the march. CEPRODEHI had filed complaints with the authorities and police had provided protection to them during the marches. The circumstances of his killing remain to be clarified but Amnesty International is concerned that it may be related to his work at CEPRODEHI and as an outspoken advocate of gay rights.

Guerrero state police are investigating the killing and have reportedly held a friend from the LGBT community, who was the last person to see Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera alive, in custody for two days. He has since been released. Other members of the LGBT community have also been sought for questioning, including previous partners of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera. While it is vital for the authorities to follow all leads, similar cases which have occurred in other parts of Mexico have sometimes resulted in police and prosecutors focusing solely on the personal relations of the victim rather than investigating possible homophobic motives for the attack.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Condemn the killing of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera on 4 May and call for other members of CEPRODEHI and LGBT rights activists in Chilpancingo, Guerrero state to receive protection in accordance with their wishes;
- Call for a full, impartial and prompt investigation of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera's killing and for all leads suggesting a homophobic motive to the attack to be fully investigated;
- Call for the authorities to support and provide protection to the organizers of the Gay Pride march due to take place in memory of Quetzalcoatl Leija Herrera in June 2011.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 JUNE TO:

Guerrero state Governor

Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero
Palacio de Gobierno
Edificio Centro 2do. Piso
Col. Ciudad de los Servicios
C.P. 39074 Chilpancingo, Guerrero
México
Fax: 0052 747 4719956
Email: secretariaparticulargb@guerrero.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Governor

Guerrero State Attorney General

Lcdo. Alberto Lopez Rosas
Guerrero State Attorney General
René Juárez Cisneros 62 El
Potrerito
39100 Chilpancingo
Guerrero, Mexico
Fax: 0052 747 4942981
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Copies to:

Centre for Study and Projects on
Integrated Human Development
(CEPRODEHI)
Email:
ceprodehi_ac@yahoo.com.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

LGBT people and activists continue to be the target of attacks and intimidation in Mexico, particularly outside Mexico City. Impunity for these crimes remains common and steps taken by many authorities, particularly outside major urban areas, is extremely limited to protect against homophobia and make anti-discrimination legislation effective.

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