

# URGENT ACTION

## ACTIVISTS HARASSED AT PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION

**Three community activists in the central state of Mexico were threatened by members of Antorcha Campesina, a movement with close ties to the ruling political party. The three activists were publicly sharing information that was critical of the movement and the municipal government. Their safety remains at risk.**

On 14 August, **Basilio Lara Hernández, José Mateo Martínez and Taurino Cruz**, leaders of the Unique Alliance of the Valley (**Alianza Única del Valle**) were threatened by members of Antorcha Campesina, whose leader is also a representative of the municipal government in Nicolás Romero, Mexico State, outside Mexico City.

The three men were participating in a weekly display of independent news at the municipal town hall in Nicolás Romero. Their news mural boards contained information on international, national and local news stories, including the role that Antorcha Campesina played in the occupation of contested local land and criticisms of the municipal government. The director of the municipal government then told Basilio Lara Hernández, José Mateo Martínez and Taurino Cruz that unless they removed their mural boards they would be beaten up by members of Antorcha Campesina, who were on their way to the town hall. A short while later 90 members of Antorcha Campesina arrived, led by a representative of the municipal authorities. The members of Alianza Única were then pushed, shoved and their news boards were torn down. According to information received, members of Antorcha Campesina shouted threats such as "if you put them up again we will kill you"; "we are in charge here"; "you don't know who you are messing with" (*si lo vuelven a poner, los vamos a matar; aquí mandamos nosotros; no saben con quien se meten*). During the altercation, municipal police who had been present withdrew from the town hall.

Basilio Lara Hernández, José Mateo Martínez and Taurino Cruz filed a complaint with the Mexico State Attorney General's Office (Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado) regarding the threats and harassment they suffered. It is feared that this criminal complaint may result in reprisals from members of Antorcha Campesina.

### Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to ensure the safety of members of Alianza Única del Valle, including Basilio Lara Hernández, José Mateo Martínez and Taurino Cruz, in accordance with their wishes;
- Calling for a full investigation into the assault on members of Alianza Única del Valle by members of Antorcha Campesina with the apparent consent of members of the municipal government of Nicolás Romero;
- Reminding the authorities of their obligation to respect the right to freedom of expression and association as well 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 29 SEPTEMBER 2014 TO:

Governor of Mexico state  
Eruviel Ávila Villegas  
Lerdo Poniente No. 300  
Palacio del Poder Ejecutivo, Col. Centro,  
C.P. 5000, Toluca, Estado de México  
México  
Fax: +52 722 2760046  
Email: [eruviel.avila@edomex.gob.mx](mailto:eruviel.avila@edomex.gob.mx)  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Minister of 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](mailto:secretario@segob.gob.mx)  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**And copies to:**  
Local Human Rights Organization  
Centro de Derechos Humanos Zeferino  
Ladrillo  
Email: [cdhzl.presidencia@gmail.com](mailto:cdhzl.presidencia@gmail.com)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Alianza Única del Valle is active in several municipalities in the state of Mexico, supporting communities seeking recognition for housing settlements and improved services in the peripheral areas of Mexico City where precarious housing situations prevail in many communities. In recent years, the Alianza Única also helped create the local human rights organization, Centro de Derechos Humanos Zeferino Ladrillero.

Antorcha Campesina is a movement with close links to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional), particularly at the local level, where it often enjoys the support of local officials. It is frequently accused of intimidating organizations and communities that oppose its influence.

Name: Basilio Lara Hernández (m), José Mateo Martínez (m), Taurino Cruz (m) and other members of the Alianza Única del Valle  
Gender m/f: both

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