

MEXICO Octaviano Hernández Pacheco] detained
 Andrés Enríque Hernandez] detained
 Octaviana Enríque Santiago (f)
 Juana José José (f)
**other members of the indigenous community of San Isidro Miramar, San Agustín
 Loxicha municipality, Oaxaca state**

Police and soldiers have raided an indigenous community in Oaxaca state to arrest two men, reportedly beating them and threatening their families and other residents. The residents have filed a complaint, which Amnesty International fears may lead to reprisals against them and other members of the community.

The men have apparently been charged with membership of an armed opposition group. Others previously detained on such charges have been tortured to force them to confess.

The 25 May pre-dawn raid on the community of San Isidro Miramar involved up to 100 members of the *Policía Preventiva del Estado*, Preventive State Police, *Policía Judicial del Estado*, State Judicial Police, and the army. With them were six hooded men. Witnesses have testified that these men were residents of the municipality of San Agustín Loxicha, of which the community is part. One of them was apparently the municipal president, who is allied to the ruling *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), Institutional Revolutionary Party.

Witnesses said that no warrant was shown. The authorities have since stated that the two men faced charges of murder and membership of the armed opposition group *Ejército Popular Revolucionario* (EPR), Popular Revolutionary Army, and that the warrants for their arrest dated from 1998.

According to reports, the police and soldiers broke down doors, threw Juana José José to the ground, holding her with a boot to the neck and kicking her in the leg. Octaviana Enrique Santiago was beaten and threatened with a gun: she was told that she would be killed if she didn't shut up. Other members of the community were beaten and threatened with arrest or death.

Community members have made an official complaint to the authorities. In the past people who have lodged such complaints have often faced direct reprisals. Human rights organizations fear that armed civilian groups in the area allied to the PRI may target the families of those arrested and the community.

Octaviano Hernández Pacheco and Andrés Enríque Hernandez are both being held in the local state prison of Etlá.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There is a military presence in the state of Oaxaca, one of the 32 states that make up the Mexican federation, ostensibly to combat armed opposition groups and drug trafficking. This, together with the presence of the armed opposition groups themselves, has contributed to the grave human rights situation in the state. Political violence and community divisions are often made worse by the tacit support of the security forces for those sections of the community which support the ruling PRI. Tensions are particularly high in the run-up to the presidential elections, to be held on 2 July.

In recent years the municipality of Loxicha has been a centre of political violence in the state. Scores of residents have been killed and over 100 have been detained on charges of links with armed opposition groups. Many have been released for lack of evidence after long periods in pretrial detention. More than 80 remain in prison but few have been sentenced.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to ensure that Octaviano Hernández Pacheco and Andrés Enrique Hernández are not tortured or ill-treated in custody;
- expressing concern for the safety of the men, their families and other members of the community of San Isidro Miramar in the municipality of San Agustín Loxicha, Oaxaca state;
- expressing particular concern that the men's families should not face reprisals for lodging a complaint regarding alleged abuses by the police and army during the operation;
- calling for a prompt, impartial and independent investigation into the abuses by the security forces during the operation, including the role of masked civilians and the allegations of ill-treatment and excessive use of force;
- urging that the results of the investigation be made public.

APPEALS TO: Please note that fax numbers can be difficult to obtain and fax machines are often switched off outside office hours. If you do not get through, please try again later. If a voice answers, say, "el tono de fax, por favor."

Governor of the State of Oaxaca

Lic. José Murat Casab

Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca, Palacio de Gobierno
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Telegrams: Gobernador del Estado, Oaxaca, Mexico

Faxes: + 52 951 6 37 37 / 5 50 77

Salutation: Señor Gobernador/ Dear Governor

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Jorge Madrazo, Procurador General de la República

Av Reforma 65, esq. Violeta, Col Guerrero, Mexico DF, CP 06300, MEXICO

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Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General

Attorney General of the State of Oaxaca

Lic. Sergio H. Santibañez, Procurador General de Justicia del Estado

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Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General

President of the State Human Rights Commission in Oaxaca

Dr Evencio Nicolás Martínez

Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Oaxaca

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Salutation: Estimado Dr. / Dear Dr. Martínez

COPIES TO:

Non-governmental human rights organisation

Red Oaxaquena de Derechos Humanos (Oaxacan human rights network)
Ignacio Lopez Rayon 910, Col. Centro, C.P. 68000, Oaxaca, Mexico

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 21 July 2000.