

**MEXICOFreddy Secundino Sánchez, journalist, and his family**

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Men who said they were police officers have reportedly abducted and threatened to kill journalist Freddy Secundino Sánchez, apparently because of his work for the political magazine *Época*. The authorities have taken no action, and Amnesty International fears that he and his family are in grave danger.

On 15 June, Freddy Secundino Sánchez arrived home in a taxi at about 10pm, to find two men waiting for him. They shoved him back into the taxi, saying "Judicial Police" ("*Policia Judicial*"), pushed him to the floor and forced the driver at gunpoint to drive off. Holding a high-calibre pistol to his head, they beat Freddy Secundino Sánchez about the face and chest, and told him: "We came to kill you...think of who you've bad-mouthed in your bloody magazine, because they sent us to finish you off" ("*Venimos a matarte...recuerda a quién has madreado en tu pincho revista porque nos mandaron para enfriarte*").

Freddy Secundino Sánchez had been writing about Mexico's presidential elections of 2 July, which saw the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), Party of the Institutionalised Revolution, unseated after 71 years in power.

They drove around for more than two hours before they let him go, warning him: "This time we'll let you live, but if you dare report this to the Attorney General, write about it in your bloody magazine or tell your bloody colleagues, then you won't escape" ("*Por esta vez te salvaste...pero...si te atreves a denunciarlo en la Procuraduría, en tu pinche revista o con tus pinches colegas...ahora sí no te escapas*"), adding that they knew where he and his family lived. The men stole all his valuables.

Despite the warning, he immediately reported the abduction to the Attorney General of Mexico City, and the national and Mexico City human rights commissions. He also asked for police protection. According to reports, the authorities took no action whatsoever.

On 7 July an anonymous caller told the journalist, "you are going to die" ("*te vas a morir*"). He reported this to the Attorney General too, and still the authorities have taken no action.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Mexican journalists often face attacks and death threats because of their work, and many live in fear of reprisals from people or organisations they have written about. Amnesty International receives frequent reports of journalists being beaten, abducted and tortured, but the authorities rarely investigate these cases effectively.

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

- expressing concern that on 15 June two men claiming to be Judicial Police officers abducted journalist Freddy Secundino Sánchez, from the magazine *Época*, and threatened to kill him;
- expressing concern that the authorities have failed to investigate the abduction or to provide protection for him and his family, even after he received a further death threat on 7 July;

- urging the authorities to take effective measures to guarantee the safety of Freddy Secundino Sánchez and his family, in accordance with the family's own wishes;
- calling for an immediate, full and impartial investigation into the abduction, beating and threats, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- citing the September 1998 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights recommendation that the Mexican authorities "adopt the necessary measures to punish the perpetrators of crimes committed against persons exercising the right to freedom of expression, including a speedy, effective, and impartial investigation into complaints of harassment involving journalists..." (Report on the situation of Human Rights in Mexico, OEA/Ser.L/V/II.100, paragraph 671).

**APPEALS TO: (If a voice answers when you send a fax, ask for "el tono de fax, por favor")**

Attorney General of Mexico City

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**Salutation: Señor Procurador / Dear Attorney General**

Attorney General of the Republic

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**Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General**

Governmental National Human Rights Commission

Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández,  
Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH),  
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**Salutation: Estimado Dr. Soberanes / Dear Dr. Soberanes**

**COPIES TO:**

Non-governmental human rights organization

Red Nacional "Todos los Derechos para Todos"  
A.P. 7-1479, México D.F., 06700 MÉXICO

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 29 August 2000.