

URGENT ACTION

DEMAND LAW TO BAN ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

From 19 January, the state government and legislature of Nuevo León, northern Mexico, are considering a proposed bill to criminalise enforced disappearance. With 50,000 people killed and thousands missing in Mexico since 2006, this is a crucial opportunity to increase the chance of justice for people who are abducted and disappeared.

This week the state legislature of the Nuevo Leon in northern Mexico is to consider a proposed bill to criminalise the crime of enforced disappearance in the state's criminal code. It is vital that the offence of enforced disappearance is codified in accordance with international human rights law and standards to ensure the effective legal means of combating this grave human rights crime. Reports of enforced disappearances in which state officials have been implicated have risen sharply in recent years, but impunity for those involved remains the norm. The absence of a criminal offence to adequately investigate and prosecute public officials implicated in the detention or abduction of people and the refusal to provide information on their whereabouts or fate is a major obstacle to holding those responsible to justice, locating the whereabouts of those disappeared and ensuring full reparations for victims.

Local human rights organizations in Nuevo Leon have documented hundreds of cases of individuals who have been abducted and disappeared in the context of drug cartels fighting for control of the supply routes in the state and the measures taken by the authorities which frequently result in human rights violations. Municipal and state police are frequently implicated of complicity with criminal gangs. Human rights organizations estimate that public officials are either directly or indirectly implicated in 40 per cent of abductions in the state.

Mexico has ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance which requires it to take the necessary measures to ensure that enforced disappearance constitutes an offence under its criminal law. However, Mexico has failed so far to make crucial declarations under articles 31 and 32 of the Convention - recognizing the competence of the Enforced Disappearances Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals claiming to be victims or by other states.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urge the state government and legislatures to agree and pass reforms to criminalize the offence of enforced disappearance in accordance with international human rights law and standards;
- Urge the state authorities that all public officials implicated in enforced disappearance are investigated and held to account in line with Mexico human rights obligations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 FEBRUARY 2012 TO:

State Governor
 C. Lic. Rodrigo Medina de la Cruz
 Gobernador del Estado de Nuevo León
 Email: gobernador@nuevoleon.gob.mx
 Fax: +52 81 83 449877

Salutation: Dear Governor

President of Legislature, Nuevo Leon
 Prof. Jorge Santiago Alanís Almaguer
 Presidente de la Mesa Directiva de la
 LXXII Legislatura del Congreso del
 Estado de Nuevo León
 Email: jorgesantiagoalanis@hotmail.com;
jorge.alanis@congreso-nl.gob.mx
 Fax: +52 81 8150 9500 (ext. 1642)

Salutation: Dear Congressman

President of Justice Commission of
 Legislature
 Lic. César Garza Villarreal
 Presidente de la Comisión de Justicia y
 Seguridad Pública de la LXXII
 Legislatura del
 H. Congreso del Estado de Nuevo León.
 Email: cesar.garza@congreso-nl.gob.mx
 Fax: +52 81 8150 9500 (ext. 1642)

Salutation: Dear Congressman

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.



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Almost 50,000 people have been killed since President Calderon took office in December 2006 in the context of drug cartels disputing control for territory and the State's public security response. In the last two years violence has spread dramatically to the state of Nuevo Leon, and particularly the state capital, Monterrey. Amnesty International has documented several cases of enforced disappearance and unlawful killings in which state officials have been implicated.

Mexico is a federal country with each of the 31 states and the Federal District operating its own criminal jurisdiction and criminal code. Crimes of enforced disappearance, illegal detention or abduction in which state or municipal officials are implicated presently fall to the state jurisdiction, not the federal authorities to investigate and prosecute.

Name: Victims of enforced disappearances in Mexico
Gender m/f: both

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