

PUBLIC

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12 June 2006

Further Information on UA 48/06 (AMR 41/015/2006, 3 March 2006) Fear for safety

MEXICO Erica Serrano Frías (f), lawyer representing environmental network ROGAZ

New name: Noé Aguirre Orozco, member of ROGAZ, and his family

On 6 June, an anonymous phone call was made to the family-run shop of Noé Aguirre Orozco warning him that his life is in danger. The threat appears to be linked to his environmental work as part of a group campaigning against the construction of a tourist development in the municipality of Zihuatanejo, Guerrero State and the contamination of a local bay. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for his safety.

At midday on 6 June, Noé Aguirre Orozco's father, Francisco Aguirre received a phone call from a man who asked him if he was Noé's father, and who told him that they were watching his son. The caller also said that Noé Aguirre Orozco's life was in danger to which Francisco Aguirre replied that he knew who was making the threat. The caller responded by saying "Ah! You are threatening me, you'll see what happens to you" (*ah! me amenazas, vas a ver como les va a ir*).

Later on the same day, when Noé Aguirre Orozco arrived at the shop, he and his father noticed that four men were acting suspiciously along the street where the shop is located. The men were then seen getting into a pick-up truck and driving away. Approximately 10 minutes later, a man dressed in a police uniform was seen standing outside the door of the shop. He then left but came back an hour later allegedly carrying a sub machine-gun which he pointed at Noé Aguirre Orozco and his father. Noé Aguirre has filed a complaint about the incident with the *Oficina del Ministerio Público*, State Prosecutor's Office in Zihuatanejo. His case and that of Erica Serrano has also been brought before the Human Rights State Commission in Guerrero (*Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos en Guerrero*).

It is believed that the incidents are linked to Noé Aguirre Orozco's work with *Red de Organizaciones Ambientalistas de Zihuatanejo* (ROGAZ), Network of Environmentalist Organizations from Zihuatanejo, which has been campaigning to prevent the construction of a tourist development called *Marina Puerto Mío* in the Bay of Zihuatanejo, in the southern State of Guerrero. ROGAZ has also been campaigning to reduce the level of contamination in the waters of the Bay, which has reportedly been caused in part by the direct discharge of sewage into the bay, and the development of tourists' complexes.

In the first week of June, Erica Serrano and Noé Aguirre Orozco reportedly held a meeting with former Bishop Samuel Ruiz from Chiapas, Southern Mexico, who is a very well know activist in the country. During the meeting, he allegedly encouraged them to continue seeking international support for their campaign. An article about this meeting was published in a State newspaper the day before the phone call was made. About two weeks before, they had also been distributing information to the public about the environmental situation in Zihuatanejo Bay during a protest held in a public square in the centre of town.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Noé Aguirre Orozco and his family, after the death threats and acts of intimidation which he and his father suffered on 6 June 2006;
- calling for a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into these incidents, for the findings to be published and for those responsible to be brought to justice;

- calling on the authorities to ensure that Noé Aguirre Orozco, his family and colleagues do not suffer any further intimidation as a result of his work as a human rights and environmental activist, and to guarantee that they receive protection in accordance with their wishes;
- reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

State Governor

Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo
Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero
Boulevard Rene Juarez Cisneros No. 62, Edificio B
Ciudad de los Servicios, CP 39075, Chilpancingo
Guerrero, Mexico

Fax: +52 747 47 19956 (if someone answers, say "tono de fax por favor")

Salutation: Dear Governor /Señor Gobernador

Attorney General of Guerrero

Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia
Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Guerrero
Carretera Nacional México-Acapulco Km. 6+300
Tramo Chilpancingo- Petaquillos, Chilpancingo 39090, Guerrero, Mexico

Fax: + 52 747 47 22328

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador

Director of Human Rights – Interior Ministry

Dr. Ricardo Sepúlveda
Secretaría de Gobernación
Reforma 99, PISO 21, PH, Colonia Tabacalera, C.P. 06030, México D.F. México

Fax: +52 55 51 28 0234 (if someone answers say: "tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Dear Sir/Estimado Doctor

COPIES TO:

State Human Rights Commission

Lic. Juan Alarcón Hernández
Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos
Av. Juárez esquina Galo Soberón y Parra, Col. Centro, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, CP. 39000

Fax: +52 747 471 0230

Salutation: Dear Sr/ Estimado Sr. Presidente

Human Rights Organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" A.C., (PRODH)
Serapio Rendon 57-B, Col. San Rafael, 06470, México D.F. Mexico

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 24 July 2006.