

PUBLIC

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18 August 2008

UA 229/08 Intimidation/III-treatment

MEXICO **Dante Valdez (m), teacher**
Members of the Ejido de Huizopa community, Chihuahua state

Primary school teacher Dante Valdez was attacked on 13 August by a group of about 30 people who burst into a local school in Madera, Chihuahua state, where he was taking part in a teacher training course. The attackers, most of whom work for a local mine, pushed and kicked him, and told him to stay out of their business. Other teachers taking part in the course intervened to protect Dante Valdez. He later reported the attack to the State Prosecutor. Amnesty International has been informed that as of yet no police investigation has been initiated into the attack.

Dante Valdez has been one of the leaders of peaceful protests by members of Huizopa community, near Madera. Members of this community, who live on land they own communally, part of which they have leased to a mining company, have been staging peaceful protests since May 2008 outside the grounds on which the company operates. The protestors claim that the company has taken more land than it is entitled to and that the mine is damaging the local environment and water supply.

Amnesty International fears that other protestors from Huizopa community may be at risk of attacks like the one experienced by Dante Valdez in order to pressurise and persuade them to give up their campaigning.

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

- expressing concern that a police investigation into Dante Valdez' attack has not been initiated at the time of writing;
- calling on the authorities to order an investigation into the 13 August attack on teacher Dante Valdez at the Escuela Abraham González and bring those responsible to justice;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that the Huizopa community are able to exercise the right to peaceful protest in safety.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. José Reyes Baeza Terrazas
Gobernador Constitucional de Chihuahua
Calle Aldama número 901, Colonia Centro, C.P. 31000
Palacio de Gobierno, Primer Piso.
Chihuahua, México.

Fax: +52 614 429 3300 You will be asked for an extension number. Say "uno, uno, cero, seis, seis" (11066)

Email: oacosta@chihuahua.gob.mx (Secretary of the Governor)

Salutation: Dear Governor/Señor Gobernador

Public Security Minister of Chihuahua State

Lic. Javier Alberto Torres Cardona
Secretario de Seguridad Pública de Chihuahua
Carretera Chihuahua – Aldama KM 3600
Complejo de Seguridad Pública

Chihuahua, México.

Fax: +52 614 429 7300 You will be asked for an extension number: say "uno, cero, cinco, cero, ocho" OR "uno, cero, tres, tres, cuatro" (10508 or 10334).

Salutation: Dear Minister/Señor Ministro

President of the Chihuahua Human Rights Commission

Lic. Leopoldo González Baeza

Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Chihuahua

Calle Décima y Mina, 1000

Col. Centro, C.P. 31000

Chihuahua, México.

Fax: +52 614 410 0828 (if someone answers say "me da tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Dear President/ Señor Presidente

COPIES TO:

Human rights organisation

Proyecto de Derechos Económicos, Sociales, y Culturales, A.C.

Zamora #169, B2

Col. Condesa, México D.F.

Fax: +52 55 521 22229

Email: <mailto:proyectodesc@gmail.com>

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 September 2008.