

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/001/2006

19 July 2006

UA 197/06      Fear for safety/ torture/ ill-treatment

MEXICO      Aureliano Álvarez Gómez (m)  
Tiburcio Gómez Pérez (m)  
Prisoners belonging to the group "*La Voz del Amate*" (The Voice of El Amate)

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Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez, inmates of the state prison number 14 "El Amate", in Cintalapa municipality, Chiapas state, have been tortured and ill-treated by other prisoners, reportedly with the consent of the prison authorities. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety and that of other inmates who are holding a protest in the prison.

Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez, members of the Tsotsil indigenous group, were remanded in custody on 29 June 2006, awaiting trial on charges of kidnapping. They had been held by prosecutors in a secure building (*casa de arraigo*) for nearly two months while the case against them was put together. During this time they were reportedly tortured and ill-treated by judicial police in order to extract information and a confession. According to reports, since the two arrived in El Amate prison they have been beaten on several occasions by a gang of other inmates, they have been held underwater in a drainage tank, and had plastic bags placed over their heads and chlorine thrown on their bodies to cause burns.

The ill-treatment of Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez has been publicized by a small group of inmates known as "The Voice of El Amate" (*La Voz del Amate*), who consider themselves to be political prisoners. The group believe that their imprisonment is the result of their support for the armed opposition group, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*, EZLN), and "*La Otra Campaña*" ("The Other Campaign"), a peaceful political campaign initiated in early 2006 by the EZLN. Since January 2006, the group has been protesting about their detention and calling for recognition as political prisoners. The prison authorities have reportedly sought to encourage other prisoners to harass and threaten members of "*La Voz del Amate*" since the group began its protest.

When members of "*La Voz del Amate*" released a statement to the media about the attacks on Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez on 13 July, the prison officials reportedly convened a meeting of other inmates at the prison, in order to persuade them to organize a petition requesting the transfer of members of "*La Voz del Amate*" to other prisons and encouraging attacks on members of the group. According to reports, when senior prison officials go into the prison cell blocks, they are accompanied by inmates belonging to the prison gang allegedly responsible for the threats and attacks on Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez and members of "*La Voz del Amate*."

When a local human rights organization, *Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas*, which has been assisting the families of the detainees, visited the prison to assess the allegations that Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez had been tortured and ill-treated, they were only allowed to speak to the two men in the presence of officials. The State Human Rights Commission has reportedly visited the prison in connection with the case, but there is no information on what action it has taken.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Aureliano Álvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gómez Pérez and members of the prisoners' group, "La Voz del Amate" in the light of the threats against them;
- calling for the authorities to guarantee the safety of those at risk;

- calling for an impartial, prompt and impartial investigation into the alleged torture and ill-treatment suffered by Aureliano Alvarez Gómez and Tiburcio Gomez Pérez, both at the hands of other prisoners and by judicial police at the *casa de arraigo*, for the results to be made public and for all those responsible to be brought to justice;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that any prison official found to have ordered, encouraged or tolerated attacks and threats by inmates against other inmates to be suspended from duty and held to account.

**APPEALS TO:**

Governor of Chiapas

Lic. Pablo Salazar Mendiguchía

Gobernador del Estado de Chiapas,

Palacio de Gobierno, Piso 1, Col. Centro 29000, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico.

**Fax: + 52 961 61 209 17/ 256 18 (if someone answers, ask “tono de fax, por favor”)**

**Email: [secpart@prodigy.net.mx](mailto:secpart@prodigy.net.mx)**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr. Gobernador/Dear Governor**

Attorney General of Chiapas

Lic. Mariano Herrán Salvatti

Fiscal General de Justicia del Estado de Chiapas

Libramiento Norte s/n, tercer nivel, Colonia Infonavit “El Rosario”, CP 30064

Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico

**Fax: + 52 961 61 657 24**

**Email: [fiscaliachiapas@prodigy.net.mx](mailto:fiscaliachiapas@prodigy.net.mx)**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr. Fiscal/Dear Attorney General**

Chiapas State Government Coordinator of prisons (CERESOS)

Lic. Eduardo Coutiño Remy

Coordinador de CERESOS del Gobierno de Chiapas

Libramiento Sur Oriente, Km 9, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico

**Fax: + 52 961 6133154 (if someone answers, ask “tono de fax, por favor”)**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr/ Dear Sir**

President of the State Human Rights Commission

Lic. Yesmin Lima Adam

Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos,

Boulevard Comitan 143 Col. Moctezuma,

Tuxtla Gtz. Chiapas,

**Fax: + 52 961 6025784 (if someone answers, ask “tono de fax, por favor”)**

**Email: [cdh@cdh-chiapas.org.mx](mailto:cdh@cdh-chiapas.org.mx)**

**Salutation: Estimada Licenciada/ Dear Madam**

**COPIES TO:**

Human rights organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas A.C

Brasil No. 14 Barrio Mexicanos, CP. 29240, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, 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 30 August 2006.