

# URGENT ACTION

## INDIGENOUS RIGHTS ACTIVIST FACING UNFAIR TRIAL

**A human rights defender of the Na Savi Indigenous people (known in Spanish as Mixteco), has been arrested by state judicial police in south-western Mexico. He is in danger of an unfair trial.**

Maximino García Catarino, a member of the Organization for the Future of the Mixteco People (*Organización para el Futuro del Pueblo Mixteco*, OFPM) who is supposed to be receiving government protection ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, was arrested by state judicial police (*policía ministerial*) while he was at home with his family in the afternoon of 21 January. According to a local NGO, police showed no arrest warrant, and did not say why they were arresting him. But, while the police were driving him to the city of Ayutla de los Libres, they told him there was a warrant for his arrest for the murder of a man called Juan Teodoro García. They also questioned him about the whereabouts of other Na Savi (Mixteco) Indigenous people, and other OFPM leaders. When Maximino García Catarino refused to answer, the police punched and kicked him all over his body.

According to his defence lawyers, after arresting him police and prosecutors unlawfully delayed presenting Maximino García Catarino to a judge to give a statement. Amnesty International has documented cases of Indigenous activists in Ayutla de los Libres facing fabricated criminal charges and spending several years in prison, as they were denied their right to a fair trial.

### Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to investigate the allegations of ill-treatment and take measures to prevent further torture of Maximino García Catarino while he is in custody;
- Calling on them to guarantee his right to a fair trial, including the right to effective defence and access to an impartial court, and ensure that the charges he faces are not politically motivated;
- Reminding the authorities of their obligation to respect human rights defenders and ensure that they are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisal.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 MARCH 2012 TO:

#### Guerrero State Governor

Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero  
Palacio de Gobierno, Edificio Centro  
2do. Piso, Col. Ciudad de los Servicios  
C.P. 39074 Chilpancingo  
Guerrero, México  
Fax: +52 747 471 9956  
Email: [contacto@guerrero.gob.mx](mailto:contacto@guerrero.gob.mx)  
Salutation: Dear Governor

#### Minister of the Interior

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero  
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez  
México D.F., C.P.06600, México  
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414  
Email: [secretario@segob.gob.mx](mailto:secretario@segob.gob.mx)  
Salutation: Dear Minister

#### And copies to:

Centro de Derechos Humanos de la  
Montaña "Tlachinollan"  
Email:  
[tlachi.internacional2@gmail.com](mailto:tlachi.internacional2@gmail.com)

### 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.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Human rights defenders are frequently subjected to attacks and intimidation, including fabricated politically motivated criminal charges. Indigenous rights defenders have been particularly vulnerable to fabricated criminal charges where they oppose powerful local figures who dominate their communities, caciques, who sometimes collude with police and prosecutors to fabricate evidence and falsely accuse their opponents. Amnesty International has documented such cases in the municipality of Ayutla de los Libres in the past. In 2008 the organization adopted Raul Hernandez (*Organización del Pueblo Indígena Me'phaa*, OPIM) as a prisoner of conscience. He spent more than two years in prison on murder charges before finally being acquitted after an international campaign. In 2009, Raul Lucas and Manuel Ponce of OPIM's sister organization, OFPM, were abducted, tortured and killed by gunmen who are suspected of acting in collusion with local authorities. No one has been brought to justice for their killing.

Name: Maximino García Catarino

Gender m/f: m

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