

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/022/2009

27 April 2009

UA 112/09 Enforced Disappearance/ Fear for safety

MEXICO Daniel Rueda Becerril (m), aged 16
José Alfredo Arroyo Juárez (m), aged 23
Samuel Teroga Rodríguez (m), aged 19
Pablo Domínguez Montiel (m), aged 22

The individuals named above were attacked and abducted by an off-duty police officer from the town of Cuernavaca, Morelos state on 18 April. The three men and the boy have not been seen since.

The off-duty officer, who was identified by witnesses as being from the Morelos state judicial police, and other unidentified men, attacked the boy and the three men in the street in the early hours of 18 April. According to statements made by officials with the State Public Prosecutor's Office (Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado de Morelos, PGJM), the officer had failed to return a police issue firearm and a police van at the end of his shift. Witnesses saw the three men and the juvenile being beaten and heard gunshots. They then saw the boy and the three men being forced into the police van, along with the two scooters the men and boy had been riding. Witnesses have stated that other police cars also appeared at the scene but did not intervene.

Later on 18 April, the men's families tried to file a report to the PGJM on the basis of information the witnesses reported to them. However, officials with the PGJM refused to take action and said they could only file a "missing person" report after 48 hours and no action could be taken before. Representatives of the local prosecutor's office also told the families that the 3 men and the boy had not been taken to any police station or prosecutor's office.

When prosecutors finally began enquiries on 20 April, the implicated police officer was asked to report to the State Public Prosecutor's office to clarify events, but instead went into hiding. Despite issuing a warrant for his arrest, the authorities have since been unable to locate him or establish the whereabouts or fate of the three men and the boy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Police corruption and allegations of involvement in crime are routine, particularly at state level, where officials have frequently been implicated in serious criminal offences and human rights violations. Despite government commitments to clean up police forces, impunity remains the norm particularly when police are accused of committing serious human rights violations such as torture, abduction and murder. The failure of the authorities to respond promptly and effectively to credible complaints of police involvement in such abuses raises concern about wider state complicity.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of 16-year-old Daniel Rueda Becerril, José Alfredo Arroyo Juárez, Samuel Teroga Rodríguez and Pablo Domínguez Montiel, who have been missing since 18 April;
- urging the authorities to conduct a prompt, independent and impartial investigation to establish their fate and whereabouts;
- calling on the authorities to order an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the abduction of the boy and three men and ensure that any official who is directly or indirectly implicated is suspended pending a full investigation and that all those responsible are brought to justice;

- calling for a full enquiry into the failure of authorities to act promptly to locate the four abducted people on the basis of credible complaints by the families.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Morelos

Lic. Marco Antonio Adame Castillo
Gobernador del Estado de Morelos
Palacio de Gobierno, 1° Piso, Centro
Cuernavaca, C.P. 62000, Morelos, MÉXICO

Fax: +52 777 329 2330 (if someone answers, please say “me da tono de fax, por favor”)

Email: gobernador@morelos.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Governor/ Señor Gobernador

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza
Procuraduría General de la República
Av. Paseo de la Reforma n° 211-213, Piso 16
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Del. Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06500, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5346 0908

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador General

President of the National Human Rights Commission

Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández,
Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos,
Edificio “Héctor Fix Zamudio”, 6° piso
Blvd. Adolfo López Mateos n° 1922, Col. Tlacopac San Ángel, Del. Álvaro Obregón
México D.F., C.P. 01040, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5681 7199

Salutation: Señor Presidente/Dear President

COPIES TO:

Comisión Independiente de Derechos Humanos de Morelos A.C.
Calle Guerrero 4, desp. 110, col. Centro, Cuernavaca, México.

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 8 June.