

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/050/2006

31 October 2006

Further Information on UA 227/06 (AMR 41/041/2006, 24 August 2006) and follow-up (AMR 41/047/2006, 03 October 2006) - Fear for safety/use of excessive force/ fear of torture/ ill-treatment /Arbitrary detention

**MEXICO**            **Members of the teachers' union *Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación* (SNTE), Oaxaca sector (magisterial)**  
**Members of the *Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca*, APPO (Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca)**  
**Abraham Martínez Alavez (m), former rector of Oaxaca University**

**Released:**        **Ramiro Aragón Pérez (m), biologist**  
**Germán Mendoza Nube (m), teacher**

**Killed:**            **Bradley Roland Will (m), US national**  
**Jorge Alberto López Bernal (m)**  
**Fidel Sánchez García (m)**  
**At least three others**

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At least five demonstrators and one US journalist were killed in Oaxaca City between 27 and 29 October, when thousands of federal security personnel entered the centre of the city to control protests. Scores of other protestors were arrested in the security operation. However, the authorities have so far failed to make public the identities of those in detention, where they are being held and the charges they face. While supporters of the *Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca*, APPO (Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca) have withdrawn from the city centre, tension remains high. Amnesty International fears that further protests and the response of police may result in more human rights violations.

During the afternoon of 27 October, barricades erected in different parts of Oaxaca City in previous weeks by APPO supporters were attacked by armed men, who reportedly included plain clothed state police officers and municipal security officials. In one of these confrontations Bradley Roland Will, a US journalist covering the events in Oaxaca for Indymedia, was shot and killed while filming the shooting in the municipality of Santa Lucia del Camino, not far from the city centre. The same afternoon, another group of armed people, allegedly including local state officials in plain clothes, attacked barricades in the municipality of Santa María Coyotepec, reportedly causing the death of three more protesters and injuring 23 others.

Following the escalation of the violence, the federal government ordered the intervention of more than 4,000 Federal Preventive Police (PFP) agents on 29 October to end the five-month occupation of the city centre by APPO supporters and striking teachers demanding the resignation of the state governor. During the police operation, the PFP reportedly used tear gas, pepper spray, water cannons and batons against protesters, some of whom used violence to resist the police advance. Jorge Alberto López Bernal was reportedly hit in the stomach by a tear gas canister and died as a result of his injuries. Fidel Sánchez García also died during the police operation in circumstances that have yet to be established. Scores of other protesters were injured as well as at least one PFP officer who was attacked by demonstrators. According to reports, at least 41 people were detained during the police operation between 29 and 30 October, while another 20 have been reported missing to local human rights organizations. The authorities have reportedly not provided details of

the identities of the detainees, information on their whereabouts, or the reasons for their arrest. Human rights organizations have not yet been allowed access to them.

On 30 October, as a result of the negotiations between the teachers' union *Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación* (SNTE) and the Ministry of Interior, detainees Germán Mendoza Nube, Ramiro Aragón Pérez, and another APPO leader, were released, having been held since August.

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

- calling on the federal authorities to ensure respect of the rights of protestors and guarantee public security in the city of Oaxaca;
- reminding the authorities of their obligation to ensure that all force used by security personnel is proportionate and necessary to the threat faced;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all allegations of excessive use of force, including the death of Jorge Alberto López Bernal and Fidel Sánchez García on 29 October, are fully and impartially investigated;
- calling on the authorities to make public the identity and whereabouts of those detained in Oaxaca on 29 and 30 October, to guarantee their physical integrity and access to families, legal advice and medical attention, and calling for them to be either charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released immediately;
- expressing grave concern at the killing of US national Bradley Roland Will and at least three protesters on 27 October by a group of armed men who reportedly included members of state and municipal police and calling for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that state and municipal security officials clearly identify themselves and that any official found to be using a firearm illegally is arrested and held to account;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the involvement of state officials in the promotion or toleration of violence and human rights violations during the protests in Oaxaca, particularly in relation to the incidents of 27 October;
- urging the federal and state authorities to ensure that all measures taken to address the crisis in Oaxaca fully respect international human rights law and avoid taking action which may worsen the human rights situation.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Mexico

Lic. Vicente Fox Quesada

Presidente de los Estados Unidos de México

Residencia Oficial de "Los Pinos", Col. San Miguel Chapultepec, México, D.F. MEXICO

**Fax: + 52 5 55 2 77 23 76**

**Salutation: Dear President/Estimado Presidente**

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Carlos Abascal Carranza

Secretario de Gobernación, Secretaría de Gobernación

Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez, Delegación Cuauhtémoc, México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO

**Fax: + 52 55 5093 3414**

**Salutation: Dear Minister/ Estimado Secretario de Gobernación**

Minister of Public Security

Lic. Eduardo Medina Mora

Secretario de Seguridad Pública, Secretaría de Seguridad Pública

Paseo de la Reforma No.364, piso 16

Colonia Juarez, Delegación Cuahutemoc,

México DF. C.P. 06600, MEXICO

**Fax: +52 55 5241 8393**

**Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister**

Governor of Oaxaca

Ulises Ruiz Ortiz

Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca, Carretera Oaxaca, Puerto Angel, Km. 9.5

Santa María Coyotopec, C. P. 71254, Oaxaca, Oaxaca, MEXICO

**Fax:** + 52 951 511 6879 (if someone answers, say "me da tono de fax, por favor")  
**Salutation:** Señor Gobernador/Dear Governor

**COPIES TO:**

Human rights organization in Oaxaca

Red Oaxaqueña de derechos humanos

Calle Crespo 524 Interior 4-E, Col. Centro, Oaxaca, Oaxaca, CP. 68000, 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 12 December 2006.