

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## MEDIA BRIEFING

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### **Mexico: Authorities urged to tackle “torture epidemic” – Facts and Figures**

#### **TORTURE**

In 2011, Mexico’s National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) received 1,669 reports of torture and ill treatment; up from 1,161 in 2010; 1,055 in 2009 and 564 in 2008.

The majority accusations of torture and ill-treatment are levelled at state and municipal police forces.

The information provided by the CNDH is the most comprehensive data available, but it still falls well short of the true number of complaints of torture nationwide as it principally covers reports of abuses by federal officials.

Reports of torture and ill treatment in the 31 state and federal district jurisdictions are not collated nationally.

#### **PUBLIC SECURITY**

Of the more than 400,000 police agents in the country, only 30,000 are Federal Police, the rest are state and municipal police carrying out operations under state jurisdiction.

In addition, President Calderon ordered some 50,000 members of the Mexican army and navy to be deployed to carry out policing duties to combat drug cartels and organized crime since December 2006.

Military personnel receive human rights training, but reports of serious abuses, including torture and other ill-treatment, have increased sharply in recent years.

Since 2006, the armed forces have arrested more than 43,000 criminal suspects and, in many cases, taken them to barracks for interrogation, rather than being taken immediately to the Public Prosecutors Office, as the law requires.

#### **INVESTIGATIONS**

According to Mexico’s National Statistics Institute between 2006 and 2010, there was one prosecution and no convictions for torture at the federal level. In the same period in the 31 states and the federal district, there were 37 prosecutions and 18 torture convictions.

According to the Office of the Attorney General, 58 preliminary investigations into torture were opened between 2008 and 2011. Four indictments resulted.

Until now a key obstacle in bringing military personnel implicated in torture or other ill-treatment to justice was that all such cases were dealt with under the military justice system. In August 2012, the Mexican Supreme Court ruled that cases of human rights abuses committed by military personnel should be dealt with by the civilian justice system.

#### **LEGISLATION**

Legislation criminalizing torture in Mexico’s 31 states and the Federal District varies greatly but in most cases is considerably weaker than federal law and falls far short of international standards.

**For a copy of Amnesty International’s report or to arrange an interview, please contact: Josefina Salomon on +44 207 413 5562 or [jsalomon@amnesty.org](mailto:jsalomon@amnesty.org)**