

URGENT ACTION

MEXICAN INDIGENOUS LEADER AND WIFE SHOT DEAD

On 20 May, indigenous leader, Timoteo Alejandro Ramírez, and his wife, Cleriberta Castro Aguilar, were shot dead in their home in Yosoyuxi community, part of the "autonomous municipality of San Juan Copala" in the Triqui indigenous area of Oaxaca state, Mexico.

On 20 May, at least two men entered the home of Timoteo Alejandro Ramírez, aged 46, and Cleriberta Castro Aguilar, aged 36, and shot them in the head, leaving their five children unharmed in another room. Timoteo Ramírez was one of the principle leaders of the "autonomous municipality of San Juan Copala" and of the Independent Movement for Triqui Unity and Struggle (Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Triqui Independiente, MULTI), the faction of Triqui indigenous peoples which has supported the creation of the autonomous municipality.

According to local human rights organizations, shots were fired on the same day down into the streets of the village of San Juan Copala from the surrounding hills. The community has been under siege for more than a month. An armed group called Ubisort, which has links to the ruling party in Oaxaca, has blockaded the community, in apparent reprisal for the declaration of autonomy.

On 14 May, 12 women and children from San Juan Copala were abducted. They had gone to the local town of Juxtlahuaca the previous day for provisions and medical care. According to the women, as they returned to San Juan Copala, 15 armed men belonging to Ubisort stopped them at gunpoint. They were threatened, intimidated, forced to stay the night in an abandoned building, then released the following day unharmed.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling for federal and state authorities to ensure safety of the residents of San Juan Copala and other communities, such as Yosoyuxi, which are part of the self-declared autonomous municipality;
- Conduct a full and impartial federal investigation into the killing of Timoteo Alejandro Ramírez and his wife, Cleriberta Castro Aguilar, the indiscriminate arms fire directed at the village of San Juan Copala from surrounding hills and the temporary abduction by members of Ubisort of 12 Triqui indigenous women and children on 14 May;
- Ensure that the residents of San Juan Copala are free to enter and leave their community without fear of attack and that all inhabitants have access to food, water and other basic services which have been severely restricted since the blockade on the town;
- Investigate links between the Ubisort and local government officials;
- Communicate publicly the steps taken to investigate and punish all abuses committed by illegal armed groups operating in the region.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 JULY 2010 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso,
Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc,
México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414
E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx
**Salutation: Señor Secretario/
Dear Minister**

Governor of Oaxaca state

Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortíz
Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca
Carretera Oaxaca-Puerto Ángel, Km.
9.5, Santa María Coyotepec,
Oaxaca C.P. 71254, Oaxaca, MEXICO
Fax: +52 951 502 0530
**(ask for the fax: "el tono de fax, por
favor")**

Salutation: Dear Governor/

Señor Gobernador

Copies to:

Human rights organization:

Comisión Diocesana de Justicia y Paz y
al Centro Regional de Derechos
Humanos "Bartolomé Carrasco":
E-mail: barcadh09@gmail.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 110/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/039/2010/en>

Further Information on UA: 110/10 Index: AMR 41/042/2010 Issue Date: 25 May 2010

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