

UA 310/07

Fear of use of excessive force/ fear for safety

MEXICO	College graduates from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero State Members of the Federation of Socialist Rural Students of Mexico (<i>Federación de Estudiantes Campesinos Socialistas de México</i>)
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Teachers who have recently graduated from a teacher training college based in Ayotzinapa, municipality of Tuxtla, Guerrero state, and members of the Federation of Socialist Rural Students of Mexico (*Federación de Estudiantes Campesinos Socialistas de México*), are demonstrating about employment rights. They risk being violently dispersed and arrested by the Guerrero state police. Amnesty International is concerned that police may use excessive force in the operation.

Amnesty International has learnt that on the morning of 14 November, about 800 protesters marched to the site of the Guerrero State Congress building in the state capital, Chilpancingo, in order to stage a protest. The authorities claim that this protest restricted access to the Congress building. The protesters remained outside the building until 5pm, when hundreds of state police surrounded the building and forcibly dispersed them. Some of the protesters took refuge inside the Congress building and others ran from the site while the police reportedly used tear gas and beat them with batons. According to a local human rights organization, over 200 protesters were injured and were treated in a nearby hospital. At least one person was said to have suffered serious injuries to his head. Six protesters were detained before being released without charge later the same day.

According to reports, while the majority of those who are participating in the demonstrations are peaceful, some of the protesters have reportedly used violence, including throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. Amnesty International recognises the duty of the state authorities to maintain order. However, as further protests are planned, the use of force must always be strictly necessary and proportionate to the threat faced and detainees should not be subject to ill-treatment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Protest movements around local issues are common in Mexico. These often result in serious confrontations between police and demonstrators. Amnesty International has documented on several occasions how police resort to the use of excessive force to disperse protestors leaving people seriously injured. Police are rarely subject to effective control on the use of force in such circumstances and investigations into allegations of abuses virtually never result in officials being held to account.

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

- calling on the authorities to respect of the rights of protestors while guaranteeing public security;
- 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 are fully and impartially investigated;
- calling on the authorities to ensure police are effectively trained and supervised on the use of force in public order situations and are held to account according to international standards.

APPEALS TO:Governor of Guerrero

Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo
Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero
Palacio de Gobierno, Edificio Centro, piso 2, Ciudad de los Servicios
CP 39075, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, MÉXICO

Email: gobernador@guerrero.gob.mx
Fax: +52 747 471 9956
Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

Interior Ministry of Guerrero State

Lic. Armando Chavarría Barrera
Secretario General de Gobierno
Secretaría General de Gobierno del Estado de Guerrero
Palacio de Gobierno
Boulevard Lic. René Juárez Cisneros No. 62,
2º Piso, Edificio Región Norte.
Ciudad de los Servicios C. P. 39075. Chilpancingo, Guerrero.

Email: secretariageneral@guerrero.gob.mx
Fax: +52 747 471 9973

Salutation: Dear Secretary / Señor Secretario

Attorney General of Guerrero

Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia

Procurador del Estado de Guerrero

Carretera Nacional México-Acapulco Km. 6+300

Tramo Chilpancingo-Petaquillos

Chilpancingo 39090, Guerrero, MÉXICO

Fax: +52 747 47 22328

Email: cprocurador@pgjgro.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Attorney / Señor Procurador

COPIES TO:

President of the Human Rights Commission of Guerrero

Lic. Juan Alarcón Hernández

Presidente de la Comisión de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos del Estado de Guerrero (Coddehum)

Avda. Juárez, Esq. Galo Soberón y Parra

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Human rights organisation

Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montaña "Tlachinollan" AC., Calle Mina, no. 77, Col. Centro, Tlapa de Comonfort, C.P.

41304, Guerrero, 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 28 December 2007.
