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Mexico: Respect for human rights is key to resolving the conflict in Oaxaca

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Amnesty International calls on the federal authorities to ensure that officers of the Federal Preventive Police respect the human rights of demonstrators and guarantee public order, including the safety of anyone who happens to be in the vicinity of the demonstration called for today in the city of Oaxaca by the Popular People's Assembly of Oaxaca (Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca - APPO) in response to the police operation that took place on 29 October.

Force should only be used against demonstrators and the citizens of Oaxaca as a last resort and in strict accordance with the international standards of proportionality and necessity of the threat faced.

According to reports, at least two demonstrators died during the operation on 29 October. They included Alberto Jorge López Bernal who reportedly died from the impact of a teargas canister which hit him in the stomach. Several other demonstrators were injured. Amnesty International urges the federal authorities to carry out independent investigations into these incidents in order to determine whether the police acted in accordance with their legal obligations. The authorities should ensure full respect for the physical integrity and due process rights of more than 30 people reportedly in detention.

On 27 October, journalist Bradley Roland Will died from bullet wounds received during confrontations with individuals in civilian clothes who reportedly included municipal police officers. At least three other people are believed to have died in similar situations while on the APPO barricades in several parts of the city of Oaxaca. Amnesty International condemns these events and urges the authorities to carry out an impartial investigation in order to bring those responsible to justice. An independent investigation should determine the responsibility that municipal and state authorities may have had in promoting or tolerating the violence and human rights violations.

Amnesty International calls on the organizers of the protests against the Governor of Oaxaca State to observe the rule of law and avoid using any form of protest that may put the personal safety of other demonstrators or passers-by at risk.

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