

# URGENT ACTION

## INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY HARASSED FOR ACTIVISM

**Indigenous leaders and other members of their community have been intimidated and harassed in reprisal for opposing the construction of a new wind farm in the Tehuantepec Isthmus in southern Mexico. There is fear they will face further threats.**

Members of the Popular Assembly for the Community of Juchiteco (Asamblea Popular del Pueblo Juchiteco, **APPJ**), an organization of Indigenous peoples in Juchitán, Oaxaca State, reported threatening incidents which appear to have been carried out in reprisal for their opposition to the construction of a new wind farm in their community. On 5 December, **María del Carmen Ruíz Martínez**, an APPJ member, received a threatening phone call from an unidentified woman warning her and her colleagues not to attend consultation meetings about the proposed construction of the wind farm. On 4 December, **María Isabel Jiménez Salinas**, another member of the APPJ, reported having been followed by a motorcycle while she was accompanying home **Mariano Gómez López**, a member, spokesperson and legal representative of APPJ. María Isabel Jiménez Salinas managed to evade the motorcyclist by walking into an alleyway. Once she returned to her own home, María Isabel Jiménez Salinas heard gunshots aimed at her front door, window and an alleyway next to her home. A neighbour reported having seen a man picking up remnants of the bullets. The same evening Mariano Gómez López also reported that a car with tinted windows which was not known by anyone in the area was parked outside his home for about 10 minutes with the engine on. Earlier on, Mariano Gómez López had also reported seeing two unknown men ride past his home on a bicycle. One of them was wearing a cap and the other had his head covered with a scarf.

These events happened right after an intense formal consultation meeting on 4 December for the proposed building of a new wind farm in the area. The proposal was approved by a majority of the community members but there was a minority of residents who requested more time to be able to properly analyze the project and its potential effects on their community's agriculture and land. Once the consultation meeting finished, an altercation started between the two groups. Another wind farm has already been built in the area although is not yet in operation. Other Indigenous community leaders and local organizations who have protested against the construction of wind farms in the area have suffered threats and attacks in the past.

### Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of María del Carmen Ruíz Martínez, Mariano Gómez López, María Isabel Jiménez Salinas and all other APPJ members opposing the construction of the wind farm in the Tehuantepec Isthmus, in accordance with their wishes;
- Urging them to carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the instances of intimidation and harassment against Mariano and Isabel on 4 and 5 December and to bring those responsible to justice;
- Demanding that any consultation process in the Tehuantepec Isthmus is carried out according to international standards, on the basis of the free, prior and informed consent of all members of Indigenous communities affected, including reliable, accurate and accessible information on the impacts of the project.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 JANUARY 2015 TO:

Governor of Oaxaca State  
Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo  
Plaza de la Constitución, Centro  
Histórico

Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, C.P. 68000  
Fax: +52 95 1501 8100, ext. 40068  
Email: spagoboaxaca@gmail.com  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Minister of the Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong  
Secretaría de Gobernación  
Bucareli 99, col. Juárez, Cuauhtémoc,  
Distrito Federal, México, C.P. 6600  
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414  
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

**And copies to:**

Comité de Defensa Integral de Derechos  
Humanos Gobixha, CODIGO-DH  
Email: contacto@codigodh.org

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY**  
**INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some members of the Indigenous communities living in Oaxaca State opposed to previous wind farms being built on their land. They argued that there was not an adequate consultation process to obtain their free, prior and informed consent in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and were concerned about the impact the construction of such wind farms would have on their agriculture and land. As a result of their opposition, these communities were subject to threats and intimidation for several months. The government initiated a consultation process but did not made public how this was going to proceed in line with international standards or how it would have avoided exacerbating community tensions.

Human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico often face attacks, threats, abduction and killing in reprisal for their legitimate and vital work. Those behind the attacks are almost never brought to justice. Amnesty International has welcomed the establishment of the Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in 2012. Nevertheless, many of the more than 100 defenders and journalists at risk who have sought protection have not received a timely or effective response, creating frustration, insecurity and disillusionment. Despite the government's assertions that the mechanism is working effectively, it is far from being fully operational as it lacks trained staff, resources and the high level political support necessary to ensure that its protection measures are implemented by the authorities at all levels. The impunity enjoyed by those responsible for attacks, due to ineffective investigations, often conducted by state authorities who are suspected of involvement in threats, is fostering tolerance of attacks. The Mechanism should be just one part of a comprehensive strategy to address violence against those who defend human rights and journalists. The federal government has so far failed to respond convincingly to this prevailing climate of hostility towards defenders and journalists in several states.

In a recent report, Amnesty International documented various instances of killings, kidnappings, death threats, intimidation and an increase in the use of the judicial system to intimidate and repress human rights defenders throughout the Americas region in recent years. Other cases related to the Tehuantepec Isthmus such as Bettina Cruz Velázquez, the Committee for the Integrated Defence of Human Rights Gobixha (Comité de Defensa Integral de Derechos Humanos Gobixha, CODIGO-DH) are featured in the report *Defender derechos humanos en las Américas: Necesario, legítimo y peligroso* (<http://www.amnesty.org/es/library/info/AMR01/003/2014/es>). The English version will soon become available in the same link.

Name: María del Carmen Ruíz Martínez (f), Mariano Gómez López (m), María Isabel Jiménez Salinas (f) and other members of the Popular Assembly for the Community of Juchiteco (Asamblea Popular del Pueblo Juchiteco, APPJ)  
Gender m/f: both

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