

URGENT ACTION

ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNER THREATENED

Armando Mendoza Ponce, a 65-year-old male environmental campaigner in Mexico, was threatened with death and other campaigners had stones thrown at them while they prepared for a visit by Mexican parliamentarians in the village of Cerro San Pedro, San Luis Potosi state.

On 11 December, campaigners with the Frente Amplio Opositor (FAO), Broad Opposition Front, a network of organizations opposing the activities of a mining company in Cerro San Pedro, gathered to welcome a delegation of Mexican federal parliamentarians. The parliamentarians wanted to talk to local people about the impact of a nearby mine on the area. Shortly before their arrival, a group of around 100 people in favour of the mine started to throw stones at the FAO activists who were preparing food and banners for the arrival of the parliamentarians. They also took some of the FAO's banners and burned them, as well as damaging and stealing cameras belonging to FAO activists. Some FAO activists received minor injuries in the attack. **Armando Mendoza**, who is a leading member of FAO, was threatened by some of the attackers who said "we will banish you, there will be blood" (te vamos a desterrar, va correr sangre).

Armando Mendoza is one of the about eight FAO activists, mostly over the age of 65, who still live in the village of Cerro San Pedro, alongside people in favour of the mine. Most other FAO activists live outside the village. Armando Mendoza and the other activists living in Cerro San Pedro are at risk as they are isolated and receive no protection from either municipal or state police.

Armando Mendoza has been previously threatened and attacked because of his campaigning. In 2007, men shot at Armando Mendoza's van, which was empty and parked outside his house, in order to deter him from campaigning. In 2008, he was threatened with death. Other environmental campaigners were threatened, attacked, or suffered acts of vandalism. One of them, Mario Martínez Ramos, survived an attempt on his life in 2008.

The mine operating in Cerro San Pedro was shut down in November, after the mining concession was revoked by a federal administrative court. The concession was revoked after the mining company failed to take steps to minimize its impact on the environment. The mine has since been reopened while an appeal is ongoing.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threat against Armando Mendoza Ponce, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that Armando Mendoza Ponce and other members of *Frente Amplio Opositor* in Cerro San Pedro receive immediate and effective protection, in accordance with their wishes.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 FEBRUARY 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 San Luis Potosí

Dr. Fernando Toranzo Fernández
Gobernador de San Luis Potosí
Palacio de Gobierno
Carranza y Jardín Hidalgo no. 11
San Luis Potosí, C.P. 78000, MEXICO
Fax: +52 444 144 2611
Salutation: Dear Governor/Señor Gobernador

Attorney General of San Luis Potosí

Lic. Cándido Ochoa Rojas
Procurador del Estado
Eje Vial 100, 1er Piso
San Luis Potosí, C.P. 78000, MEXICO
Fax: +52 444 8 12 5364
Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador

COPIES to local organization: Nucleo Agrario de Cerro San Pedro, email: megadial199@msn.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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNER THREATENED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The village of Cerro San Pedro is on a mountain that has been mined for gold and silver for centuries. A mining company started exploration activities in 1996 and full functioning started in 2006. Local activists claim that mining in the area is damaging the mountain of Cerro San Pedro and poisoning the water.

AI has published two previous Urgent Actions on behalf of Armando Mendoza Ponce and other members of FAO: UA 217/07, AMR 41/052/2007, 22 August 2007, and AMR 41/033/2008, 22 July 2008.

UA: 344/09 Index: AMR 41/066/2009 Issue Date: 22 December 2009

