

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/003/2009

16 January 2009

UA 13/09 Fear for safety

MEXICO Rubén Valencia Núñez (m)

Rubén Valencia Núñez was harassed and attacked on 10 January. He is an activist with Oaxacan Voices Building Autonomy and Liberty (Voces Oaxaqueñas Construyendo Autonomía y Libertad, VOCAL), which is part of umbrella organization Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca, APPO). APPO led widespread protests in Oaxaca state in 2006 and 2007, calling for the resignation of the state's governor.

On the night of 10 January, as Rubén Valencia was walking in Oaxaca City centre with a friend, he was accosted by three men in a car who shouted insults at him, including "bloody APPO" (pinche APPO). One of the three men attempted to get out of the car, but was then persuaded not to by the others, and the car drove away. Rubén Valencia and his friend went into a cafe, fearing for their safety. Five minutes later, the man who had tried to get out of the car came into the cafe and stabbed Rubén Valencia with a knife, wounding him in the head and neck. In the struggle, a waiter was also stabbed in the neck. Rubén Valencia was taken to hospital, but has since been discharged.

Rubén Valencia had publicly spoken out against state and municipal police following a raid they carried out on 8 December 2008, on a house where a group of young activists organise cultural and political activities. The police used batons and teargas to force their way in to the house.

Amnesty International is concerned that because Rubén Valencia is a prominent member of VOCAL, he is at continued risk of attacks and intimidation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Another member of VOCAL, David Venegas, was detained by state police in central Oaxaca City on 13 April 2007. No warrant was produced for his arrest, and according to his testimony and photographic evidence, he was kept incommunicado and tortured. He was charged with possession of drugs, assault and resisting arrest. The evidence for his arrest appeared to have been fabricated. He was released on bail one year later after winning several federal injunctions against his detention (See UA 92/07, AMR 41/017/2007, 19 April 2007 and follow-up).

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that Rubén Valencia Núñez is given appropriate protection, in accordance with his wishes, following the attack on him on 10 January;
- calling on the authorities to conduct an independent and impartial investigation into the attack and bring those responsible to justice.
- calling for the authorities to take steps to prevent and punish all incidents of intimidation or attacks against political activists.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta

Secretaría de Gobernación

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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
Lic. Ulises Ruiz Ortiz
Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca
Carretera Oaxaca-Puerto Ángel, Km. 9.5, Santa María Coyotepec,
Oaxaca C.P. 71254, Oaxaca, MEXICO
Fax: +52 951 517 5890
E-mail: gobernador@oaxaca.gob.mx
Salutation: Señor Gobernador/Dear Governor

State Attorney General of Oaxaca
Lic. Evencio Nicolás Martínez Ramírez
Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Oaxaca
Avenida Luis Echeverría s/n,
Col. La Experimental,
San Antonio de la Cal, Oaxaca C.P. 71236,
Oaxaca, MEXICO
Fax: +52 951 511 5519
Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Estimado Procurador

COPIES TO:

Oaxacan organization
Comite 25 Noviembre
Calzada de la República # 209, Col Centro, Oaxaca, México
Email: comite25noviembre@yahoo.com.mx

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 27 February 2009.