

UA 28/00

Fear for

**MEXICO Activists from the Nu'u ji Kandi Human Rights Centre
in Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca
Nicolás Quiroz Quiroz**

Police officers have reportedly threatened to kill activists from the Nu'u ji Kandi Human Rights Centre (*Centro de Derechos Humanos Nu'u ji Kandi*) in Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety.

On 1 February two activists from the centre, Juan Ruiz Ruiz and Francisco Ramírez Hernández, went to the municipal palace in Santiago Ixtayulta with Nicolás Quiroz Quiroz, who claimed that judicial police officers had assaulted him there earlier that day. When Nicolás Quiroz identified one of the officers involved, police officers took Juan Ruiz Ruiz and Francisco Ramírez Hernández outside and warned them, "Go away, don't get involved in this, human rights activists aren't worth anything, we don't care about Eleuterio Merino Ruiz or José Rentería Pérez [both members of the Nu'u ji Kandi Human Rights Centre], even if they transfer us to another place we have a lot of friends everywhere, just so you know who we are". (*Que se vayan, que no se meten en esto, que los promotores de derechos humanos no valen nada, tampoco nos importan Eleuterio Ruiz Merino [promotor] ni José Rentería Pérez [Coordinador del Centro de Derechos Humanos Nu' u ji Kandii]; y aunque nos cambien de lugar, tenemos muchos amigos aqui y en otros lados, para que sepan quienes somos*) One of the policemen then pointed a gun at Juan Ruiz Ruiz's chest and said, "If you report us to human rights groups we will kill you tonight". (*Si nos denuncias con tus derechos humanos te matamos esta misma noche*)

Nicolás Quiroz had apparently been detained by two judicial police officers, who took him to a room in the municipal palace and told him to pay a fine for crimes they said he had committed on 27 December 1999. When Nicolás Quiroz refused to pay the fine the two policemen reportedly threatened him and then stripped him and took photographs. They then freed him on condition he return to pay the fine.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has documented a worrying series of threats and harassment of human rights defenders in Mexico. This concern was reflected in resolution 1998/4 of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which asked the Mexican authorities to "ensure full respect for the international instruments to which Mexico is a party and...attach the highest priority...to promoting the action of human rights defenders and guaranteeing their safety".

On 7 June 1999, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted a resolution on Human Rights Defenders in the Americas which urged: "...member states to persist in their efforts to provide Human Rights Defenders with the necessary guarantees and facilities to continue freely carrying out their work of promoting and protecting human rights, at the national and/or regional levels, in accordance with internationally recognized principles and agreements".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- calling for a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into reports that judicial police officers threatened human rights promoters from the Nu'u ji Kandi Human Rights Centre in Tlaxiaco, and that the same policemen stripped and threatened Nicolás Quiroz Quiroz in the municipal palace of Santiago Ixtayutla, Jamiltepec, Oaxaca on 1 February;
- expressing concern for the safety of activists from the Nu'u ji Kandi Human Rights Centre, especially Juan Ruiz Ruiz, Eleuterio Merino Ruiz and José Rentería Pérez, and of Nicolás Quiroz Quiroz, and asking the authorities to take all necessary steps to guarantee their safety;
- urging the government to adhere to its commitment to the resolution on Human Rights Defenders in the Americas, adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States on 7 June 1999, and to ensure all state agents act in accordance with principles contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of the State of Oaxaca

Lic. José Murat Casab
 Gobernador del Estado de Oaxaca
 Palacio de Gobierno
 Bustamente s/n
 Oaxaca 68000
 Estado de Oaxaca
 MEXICO

Faxes: + 52 951 6 37 37

Salutation: Señor Gobernador/ Dear Governor

Attorney General of the State of Oaxaca

Lic. Sergio H. Santibañez
 Procurador General del Estado de Oaxaca
 Avenida Luis Echeverría
 La Experimental
 San Antonio de la Cal
 Oaxaca 71236

Faxes: + 52 951 1 55 19

Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General

President of the State Human Rights Commission in Oaxaca

Dr Evencio Nicolás Martínez
 Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Oaxaca
 Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Oaxaca
 Calle de los Derechos Humanos 210
 Colonia America 68050
 Oaxaca
 Estado de Oaxaca
 MEXICO

Faxes: +52 951 35197 / 35191 (if voice answers, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Estimado Dr. / Dear Dr. Martínez

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Jorge Madrazo
 Procurador General de la República
 Av Reforma, esq. Violeta

Col Guerrero
Mexico DF, CP 06300
MEXICO

Faxes:+525 346 0906

Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez"

Serapio Rendón 57-B, Col. San Rafael

México DF., CP 06470

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 20 March 2000.