

PUBLIC

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26 June 2009

UA 173/09 Fear for safety

MEXICO **Margarita Martín De Las Nieves (f)**
Santiago Ponce Lola (m), her husband's brother
Modesta Laureano Petra (f), her sister-in-law

The three people named above, who are active members of an indigenous rights organisation, were attacked by a gunman on 24 June.

Margarita Martín de las Nieves, Santiago Ponce Lola and Modesta Laureano Petra were travelling in a pickup truck from the municipality of Ayutla de los Libres to their home in the community of La Cortina, both in Guerrero state, when they saw a man crouching beside the road, pointing a shotgun at them. They said he was dressed in black, with his face covered by a black bandanna. When they accelerated to avoid the man, he fired twice at them but missed. He ran after them and tried to fire again, but his gun jammed. The three escaped unhurt.

Earlier that day, Margarita Martín de las Nieves and Guadalupe Castro, whose husbands, human rights defenders Raúl Lucas Lucía and Manuel Ponce Rosas were abducted, tortured and killed in February 2009, had met with a state police official to arrange protection measures. The police official agreed to provide, starting that day, periodic patrols outside their homes and escorts when they travelled away from their communities. However, despite this commitment and the fact that at the meeting a specific request had been made for a police escort to accompany the women on their way home, the police never turned up. After the attack, they tried to call the police many times, on the number they had been given at the meeting that morning to call if they were in immediate danger, but there was never an answer. They also tried to use the satellite phone they had been given by the federal government for their protection, but it did not work.

The three women are active members of the Organization for the Future of the Mixteco People, *Organización para el Futuro del Pueblo Mixteco* – OPFM.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In response to the killing of human rights defenders Raúl Lucas Lucía and Manuel Ponce Rosas, both leading members of the OPFM, and the threats, harassment and intimidation suffered by their relatives and other members of Indigenous human rights organizations working in the area, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued provisional measures on 9 April 2009. The Court ordered the Mexican government to provide effective protection measures for the two widows and 105 other human rights defenders in Guerrero state. In the last few months Amnesty International has documented that the situation of human rights defenders in the state of Guerrero is deteriorating.

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

- urging the authorities to implement and strengthen the protection measures for Margarita Martin and Guadalupe Castro that have already been agreed with federal and state authorities;
- urging them to implement effective protection measures for all other human rights defenders for whom the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has requested protection;

- calling on them to investigate and punish the failure to provide protection measures for Margarita Martin, in spite of specific agreements made on 24 June;
- calling on them to investigate the attempt on the lives of Margarita Martin, Santiago Ponce Lola and Modesta Laureano, and bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta

Secretario de Gobernación

Secretaría de Gobernación

Abraham González No.48, Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc, C. P. 06600, México, D. F., MÉXICO

Fax: (+52 55) 5093 3414/15/16 (to confirm receipt /17)

E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx / contacto@segob.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister

Governor of Guerrero

Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo

Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero

Palacio de Gobierno, Boulevard René Juárez Cisneros No. 62

Edificio B, Ciudad de los Servicios, CP 39075

Chilpancingo, Guerrero, MÉXICO

Tel/Fax: (52 747) 4719801 / 9802

Email: gobernador@guerrero.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Gobernador/ Dear Governor

Attorney General of Guerrero

Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia,

Procurador del Estado de Guerrero

Boulevard René Juárez Cisneros, esquina calle Juan Jiménez Sánchez,

Col. El Potrerito, C.P. 39098, Chilpancingo, Guerrero, MÉXICO

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Salutation: Señor Procurador / Dear Attorney

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Emb. Patricia Espinosa Cantellano

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

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Email: pespinosa@sre.gob.mx

Salutation: Señora Secretaria / Dear Minister

Human Rights organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montaña "Tlachinollan" AC.

Calle Mina no. 77, Col. Centro, Tlapa de Comonfort, C.P. 41304

Guerrero, 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 7 August 2009.