

URGENT ACTION

COMMUNITY ACTIVIST THREATENED WITH DEATH

An activist for human rights in Chiapas State was threatened with death as a reprisal for bringing a case against public officials. She and her family are at grave risk.

On 30 June, **Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez** found a note written to her that had been delivered by hand to the premises of her family business in the city of San Cristóbal de las Casas in Chiapas State in the South of Mexico. Whoever wrote the note demanded that she stop pursuing police officers and other public officials that conducted an illegal raid on her home in November 2009, that she make a deal whereby she receives a pay-off to drop the charges, and then leaves the country. The writers of the note then threaten her with death, saying, "if you make this letter public, you'll be put on the list of the disappeared" ("si haces pública esta carta, ahora si pasarás a la lista de desaparecidos"). The police raid on her home in 2009 was apparently in reprisal for the work that she carries out with her husband Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz supporting local indigenous communities in the municipality of Comitán in Chiapas State. In February 2010, Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez was temporarily abducted in reprisal for pursuing the case against the officials responsible for the illegal raid on her home. The family moved to San Cristobal de las Casas for safety, and has been receiving some protection as a result of a protection order (medidas cautelares) issued by the Inter American Commission of Human Rights in 2010

The threatening letter also mentions the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Human Rights Centre, (Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas), a local human rights organisation that is representing Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez in the case against the public officials for the illegal raid on her home. The writers of the letter state that they will contract assassins to make sure that the case and the work of the organisation cannot proceed, ("les vamos a poner precio para que esto termine lo antes posible" / "we're going to put a price on your heads so that this finishes as soon as possible").

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Demanding that the authorities provide effective protection to Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez, her husband Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz, and their two children, in strict accordance with their wishes, as ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2010.
- Calling on the authorities to investigate this threat, as well as previous acts of intimidation in February and November 2010, and that they resolve the case against public officials for the raid on Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez's home in November 2009, ensuring that all the material and intellectual perpetrators of all of these abuses are held to account.
- Urging that the authorities guarantee the safety of all staff at the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Human Rights Centre in accordance with their wishes, so that they can carry out their work defending human rights.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 AUGUST 2012 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez
México D.F., C.P.06600, México
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Twitter: @AlejandroPoire
Salutation: Dear Minister

Governor of Chiapas State

Juan José Sabines Guerrero
Palacio de Gobierno del Estado de
Chiapas, 1er Piso, Av. Central y Primera
Oriente, Colonia Centro, C.P. 29009,
Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, México.
Email: secparticular@chiapas.gob.mx
Twitter: @juansabinesg
Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray
Bartolomé de las Casas
Calle Brasil 14, Barrio Mexicanos, CP
29240 San Cristóbal de las Casas,
Chiapas, México
Email: accionurgente@frayba.org.mx

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez, and her husband and fellow activist Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz have been supporting local Indigenous communities in the Chiapas municipality of Comitán. The communities have demanded a space to set up their traditional market in the town of Comitán and have organized demonstrations and road blocks to put pressure on the authorities. Margarita Martínez and Adolfo Guzmán are members of the local organization Communication and Training Link (Enlace Comunicación y Capacitación).

State police raided the home of the Guzmán Martínez family in the early hours of 8 November 2009 without a judicial warrant. The raid could have been an attempt to dissuade Margarita Martínez and Adolfo Guzmán from carrying out their work with Indigenous communities. The couple have suffered subsequent death threats and acts of intimidation, including the abduction of Margarita Martínez on 25 February 2010, and a death threat received by her in November 2010, when three men approached her and said to her, “do as we tell you otherwise we’ll shoot you” (“tienes que hacer lo que te decimos si no te damos tres plomazos”). These threats and acts of intimidation, and the threat received by letter on 30 June 2012, are apparent reprisals for pursuing the case against the police officers and other officials responsible for the raid on the home of the Guzmán Martínez family. In spite of claims by the authorities that they are investigating the incident, none of the perpetrators have been brought to justice.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights requested the Mexican authorities to guarantee the safety of the Guzmán Martínez family in March 2010.

Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez is currently preparing for a visit to New York, USA, where she will form part of a delegation of women human rights defenders that will participate in the sessions of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, at which Mexico will be examined on 17 July 2012.

Name: Margarita Guadalupe Martínez Martínez and her family
Gender m/f: F and M

Further information on UA: 195/12 Index: AMR 41/049/2012 Issue Date: 9 July 2012