

URGENT ACTION

PROTESTORS THREATENED WITH VIOLENCE

On 7 September, communal landowners and striking miners peacefully protesting outside a mine in Mexico are at risk of being violently evicted by the army and police.

According to the protesters, members of the Mexican army arrived at the protest camp outside La Platosa mine in La Sierrita, Durango state in northwest Mexico on 7 September, and threatened to violently remove them. An officer reportedly said: "Dismantle your encampment or you will get seriously beaten, we have orders from above to get you out of here, you have a few days only, if not we will come back with all full force" ("*Levanten su campamento si no les vamos a madrear, traemos ordenes de arriba para sacarlos, tienen unos días si no vamos a regresar con todo*").

A formal complaint about this threat has been filed at the Mexican Human Rights Commission (Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos) and the Durango State Human Rights Commission (Comision Estatal de Derechos Humanos), but neither party has visited the protest site.

The protestors at the encampment, many of whom are women and children, believe La Platosa silver mine has breached agreements with both the communal farmers on whose land the mine is situated, and mine workers who have sought to establish an independent trade union at the mine. On 29 August, protestors who were blocking the road to the mine were threatened with violence by 100 members of the army and police. As a result, the protestors ceased blocking the road but maintained the encampment. On 7 September, protestors also reported receiving threats from supporters of the official union recognised by the mine operator. Attempts to reach a negotiated resolution to the conflict have so far failed.

A non-governmental human rights organization, The Project of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Proyecto de Derechos Economicos Sociales y Culturales, ProDESC) – which has supported members of the community and miners participating in the protest – has faced repeated smear campaigns attacking its work with members of the community and miners.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the federal and state authorities to guarantee the safety of the protestors of La Sierrita in the face of these threats of violence;
- Urging authorities to fully investigate the threats made on 7 September, and to publicly recognise the right of ProDESC to carry out its work without fear of reprisal and unfounded smear campaigns;
- Asking authorities to ensure respect for the protestors' right to peaceful protest and association and ensure measures to resolve the dispute respect the rights of the community and striking miners.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 OCTOBER 2012 TO:

Governor of Durango State

Lic. Jorge Herrera Caldera
5 de Febrero #800 Pte, Col. Centro,
Durango, Durango, México, CP 34000
Fax: +52 618 827 0847
Email: transparencia@durango.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Governor

Minister of Interior

Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez
Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P.06600, México
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Local NGO

Proyecto de Derechos Económicos,
Sociales y Culturales, PRODESC
Email: prodesc@prodesc.org.mx

Send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

PROTESTORS THREATENED WITH VIOLENCE

Name: Communal landowners and striking miners of La Sierrita

Gender m/f: Both

UA: 262/12 Index: AMR 41/064/2012 Issue Date: 11 September 2012