

URGENT ACTION

COMMUNITY LEADER KILLED; FAMILY STILL AT RISK

Peasant farmer and community leader Javier Torres Cruz was shot and killed by armed men in Guerrero state, southern Mexico on 18 April. His brothers have since been shot at, and there are grave concerns for the safety of his family.

On 18 April Javier Torres Cruz was shot to death by a group of armed men in Puerto de La Mosca, close to the community of La Morena in the Petatlán municipality, Guerrero state, where he lived with his family. Upon hearing what happened, his brothers, Felipe and Alejandro Torres, went to where the shooting took place. The brothers were shot at by armed men and Felipe Torres was gravely injured. He is now recovering from the injuries sustained.

Javier Torres Cruz's assassination follows a pattern of attacks and intimidation against him and members of his family. In December 2008, he was abducted for a period of ten days. On his release, he had a number of bruises, particularly on his hands, and complained of strong abdominal pains. His family said that he had been blindfolded and did not know where he had been held, and they believed that he had been detained by soldiers. No effective investigation was ever carried out by the authorities and those responsible for the abduction and torture were never brought to justice.

Javier Torres Cruz was a member of a grassroots organization, Organización Ecologista de la Sierra de Coyuca y Petatlán (Environmental Organization of the Coyuca and Petatlán Mountains) and worked to protect the highlands of Petatlán.

In September 2007, Javier Torres Cruz and his uncle had testified against a local political boss (*cacique*) following his alleged involvement in the killing of human rights defender, Digna Ochoa y Plácido, in Mexico City in 2001. Local human rights organizations believe that Javier Torres Cruz's assassination may be connected to his role as a witness in this case, and to his outspoken denunciations of abuses committed by the military in Petatlán municipality over the last few years.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Urge the authorities to provide Javier Torres Cruz's family with immediate and effective protection, in accordance with their wishes;
- Call on the authorities to conduct a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the killing of Javier Torres Cruz and the shooting of Felipe and Alejandro Torres with the results published and those responsible brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 JUNE 2011 TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

Marisela Morales Ibañez
Procuradora General de Justicia de la República
Av. Paseo de la reforma 211 – 213
Col. Cuahatemoc, Del. Cuahatemoc,
México D.F., México
Fax: +52 555 346 0908 (keep trying)
Email: mmoralesi@pgr.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Madam / Estimada Procuradora

Governor of Guerrero state

Lic. Ángel Heladio Aguirre Rivero
Gobernador Constitucional del Estado de Guerrero
Palacio de Gobierno Edificio Centro
2do. Piso, Col. Ciudad de los Servicios
C.P. 39074 Chilpancingo
Guerrero, México
Fax: +52 747 471 9956
Email: contacto@guerrero.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

And copies to:

Guerrero State Attorney General

Lic. Jesús Ramírez Guerrero
Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Guerrero
Carretera Nacional México-Acapulco
Km. 6 + 300
C.P. 39090
Chilpancingo, Guerrero,
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Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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