

URGENT ACTION

FAMILY OF 'DISAPPEARED' MEN THREATENED

Following the disappearance of eight members of the Muñoz family by six armed men in Chihuahua state, Mexico, their family have received threatening telephone calls.

On 13 September, the Muñoz family received a telephone call to their family home. The person calling asked to speak to **Toribio Jaime Muñoz González**, who the caller claimed had been detained for fraud and robbery. The member of the Muñoz family who picked up the phone became scared and hung up the phone. Toribio Jaime Muñoz González is one of the eight members of the Muñoz family who has been missing since 19 June

On 26 September, there was a second phone call to their home, again asking to speak to Toribio Jaime Muñoz González. The caller asked whether he was still missing. They then went on to say: "And what about you, are you not afraid of being disappeared" (*Y a ti ¿no te da miedo que te desaparezcan?*). The caller then asked who he was talking to. The woman who picked up the phone explained that she was not a family member. The caller's response was: "Go and clean the shit then" (*Vete a limpiar la mierda pues*) and hung up.

On 19 June, around 10 unmarked vehicles arrived at the Muñoz family home in a neighbourhood of Anahuac, Cuauhtémoc municipality, where the family was holding a gathering. Six heavily armed men wearing black uniforms forced their way into the house and hit and handcuffed the male members of the family. The women present were threatened and told to look away. However, they noticed that at least one uniform had "Federal Police" written on it. The men were forced into waiting vehicles and driven away. They have not been heard from since. During the raid, one of the women escaped and rang the municipal police emergency line but no assistance was sent. Instead, a municipal police patrol car was seen searching for the woman who had raised the alarm.

The family believe the enforced disappearances were in reprisal for a dispute that had occurred between members of the family and municipal police earlier in the day. According to the family, municipal police had refused to assist when the family reported a man firing a gun outside a family gathering. The dispute resulted in a municipal police officer alleging that a member of the family had struck him.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Call for protection measures for the Muñoz family in accordance with their wishes and express concern at the apparent enforced disappearance by police agents of eight members of the family and call for immediate measures to establish their whereabouts and guarantee their safety;
- Call for an independent, impartial and thorough investigation in the detention of the eight men, including evidence of police involvement, and for all those responsible to be brought to justice;
- Call for the families and their legal advisers to be provided full information relating to investigations undertaken;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 NOVEMBER 2011 TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

Marisela Morales Ibáñez
Av. Paseo de la reforma 211 – 213
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Del. Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06500, México
Fax: +52 55 5346 0908 (ask for "fax")
Email: mmoralesi@pgr.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. César Duarte Jáquez
Palacio de Gobierno, 1er piso, C.
Aldama No. 901, Col. Centro, C.P. 31000
Chihuahua, Chih., México
Fax: +52 614 429 3300, ext. 11066
Email: despachodelejecutivo@hotmail.com

Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Federal Secretary of Public Security

Ing. Genaro García Luna
Avenida Constituyentes 947
Col. Belén de las Flores
Álvaro Obregón, México, DF.,
C.P. 1110, México
Fax: +52 55 1103 6189

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 285/11. Further information:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/056/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2007, violence linked to organized crime has spiralled in Mexico. The government attributes more than 35,000 killings during this period to organized crime. President Calderón's administration has attempted to combat the drug cartels by deploying thousands of federal police and over 50,000 military personnel in the worst affected areas. Chihuahua State has witnessed some of the worst violence and reports of human rights violations by military and police have risen sharply, including arbitrary detention, torture, unlawful killings and enforced disappearances. In several instances, some authorities have tried to attribute abuses committed by state agents to criminal gangs.

Names: Muñoz family

Gender m/f: Male and female

Further Information on UA: 285/11 Index: AMR 41/062/2011 Issue Date: 4 October 2011

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