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## **Mexico: Humanitarian convoy must be given safe passage to Indigenous communities under siege**

Amnesty International today called on government authorities and illegal armed groups to ensure safe passage for the second convoy attempting to reach blockaded Indigenous communities in Oaxaca state, southern Mexico.

Two members of a previous convoy were killed when they tried to reach the area on 27 April.

The unit carries humanitarian supplies destined for 700 people living under virtual siege in San Juan Copala, where illegal armed groups have entrapped them by restricting food, electricity and water resources, while killing those who have tried to break the blockade.

"All parties must respect human rights and take every step necessary to ensure that the convoy this time can proceed peacefully without fear of attack," said Kerrie Howard, Deputy Americas Director at Amnesty International.

Oaxaca state authorities have so far refused to commit themselves to guarantee the safety of the humanitarian group, despite the residents' urgent need to access the outside world and basic services.

"The federal and state government must show their lasting commitment to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of all people of San Juan Copala. Ensuring safe transit to the community for the humanitarian convoy is essential," said Kerrie Howard.

In a first attempt to reach the community in April, a convoy was ambushed near San Juan Copala by 30 armed men who killed local human rights defender Beatriz Alberta Cariño and Finnish international observer, Jyri Antero Jaakkola.

An illegal armed group known as Ubisort, which has reported links to the governing political party in Oaxaca, has been terrorizing San Juan Copala after the community declared itself an autonomous municipality in 2007.

Despite repeated calls for the state and federal government to take action, the siege has not been broken and no members of the illegal armed groups, including Ubisort, have been brought to justice for the recent killings and attacks.