

URGENT ACTION

JORGE ARZAVE ORIHUELA GETS NEW PHONE THREAT

Human rights defender Jorge Arzave Orihuela has received a further threatening phone call at his home in Lomas de San Francisco Tepojaco, Mexico State. He and his family are in danger.

On 13 June, **Jorge Arzave Orihuela** received another threatening phone call, from a man who identified himself as a member of a notorious organized crime group. The caller said that the previous day they “had come to ‘visit’ him” (*ayer lo habían pasado a “visitar”*), had taken photos of Jorge Arzave Orihuela and were going to “abduct him” (*que lo iban a “levantar”*). He has told the authorities, but has not filed a formal complaint, as earlier complaints have not resulted in an effective official investigation.

Hours before the threatening phone call, Jorge Arzave had been discussing protection measures with representatives of the Federal Human Rights Defender and Journalist Protection Mechanism, but as his case is being treated as non-urgent, new more effective measures have not yet been agreed.

The threatening phone call may have been linked to Jorge Arzave Orihuela’s work promoting the right to adequate housing with other members of the community of Lomas de San Francisco Tepojaco. On 10 June he was notified by a federal administrative court that the municipal president had been issued with a fine for failing to comply with legal requirements to provide the community with services, such as water. This was the third time in two months the municipal president had been issued such fines for non-compliance. Jorge Arzave Orihuela told the media of these three rulings in favour of the community.

Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Jorge Arzave Orihuela and his family in accordance with their wishes;
- Urging them to order a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threatening phone call Jorge Arzave Orihuela received on 13 June and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding the authorities of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 JULY 2014 TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

Jesús Murillo Karam
Paseo de la Reforma 211-213
Col. Cuauhtémoc, México D.F.
C.P. 06500, México
Fax: +52 55 5346 0908 (keep trying)
Email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Governor of Mexico State

Eruviel Avila Villegas
Palacio del Poder Ejecutivo
Lerdo Poniente No. 300
Col. Centro, C.P. 50000
Toluca, Mexico State, Mexico
Fax: +52 722 276 0046
Email: eruviel.avila@edomex.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Local NGO

Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel
Agustín Pro Juárez
Email:
accionesurgente@centroprodh.org.mx

Also 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. This is the first update of UA 184/13. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/040/2013/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jorge Arzave Orihuela bought his house in the low-income Conjunto Urbano Lomas de San Francisco Tepojaco, Mexico State in the outskirts of Mexico City in 2003. His home and many others soon began to collapse and the ground beneath them began to subside. Despite commitments made by the authorities to provide services and improve the environment of the housing scheme, the area has limited access to running water, no health clinics, a poor transportation system, overcrowded schools, and is next to a landfill site. Some residents have abandoned their houses for their own safety. Jorge Arzave Orihuela has been demanding action from the developers and the local government.

Human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico often face attacks, threats, abduction and killing in reprisal for their legitimate and vital work. Those behind the attacks are almost never brought to justice. Amnesty International has welcomed the establishment of the Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in 2012. Nevertheless, many of the more than 100 defenders and journalists at risk who have sought protection have not received a timely or effective response, creating frustration, insecurity and disillusionment. Despite the government's assertions that the mechanism is working effectively, it is far from being fully operational as it lacks trained staff, resources and the high level political support necessary to ensure that its protection measures are implemented by the authorities at all levels. The impunity enjoyed by those responsible for attacks, due to ineffective investigations, often conducted by state authorities who are suspected of involvement in threats, is fostering tolerance of attacks. The Mechanism should be just one part of a comprehensive strategy to address violence against those defending human rights and journalists. The federal government has so far failed to respond convincingly to this prevailing climate of hostility to defenders and journalists in several states.

Name: Jorge Arzave Orihuela

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 184/13 Index: AMR 41/022/2014 Issue Date: 17 June 2014