
MEXICO

OBSERVATORY FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS
ANNUAL REPORT 2011

In 2010 and 2011, frequent attacks continued against human rights defenders in Mexico. Killings, constant threats and harassment were reported against defenders who denounced human rights violations committed by the armed forces, and against defenders of women's rights, defenders of indigenous peoples' rights and peasants' rights and environmental rights defenders. Defenders of migrant rights and journalists who denounced corruption and impunity also suffered a constant climate of risk.

Political context

In 2010 and 2011, the Government of President Felipe Calderón continued to concentrate its efforts on combating organised crime and drug trafficking, through the deployment of the army in tasks that legally correspond to the police. This strategy led to an increase in the number of human rights violations committed by the army without effective controls by civil State institutions. The use of military jurisdiction to try cases of human rights violations not only led to impunity being maintained, but also contradicted the Mexican State's international obligations, as in 2010, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) condemned the State of Mexico on three occasions for human rights violations against civilians committed by members of the army who were tried by the military justice system. The IACtHR asked the Mexican State to reform the Military Justice Code so that it does not continue to try this kind of crimes¹. Moreover, levels of violence and insecurity continued to be alarming. According to official figures, in 2010, 15,273 murders were committed related to organised crime, which was an increase of 59% compared to 2009².

Furthermore, serious violations of the human rights of migrants passing through Mexico were not adequately prevented. In 2010 and 2011, mass

1/ See IACtHR Sentences, *Case of Fernández Ortega and others vs. Mexico*, August 30, 2010, *Case of Rosendo Cantú and other vs. Mexico*, August 31, 2010, and *Case of Cabrera García and Montiel Flores vs. Mexico*, November 26, 2010. Nevertheless, as of April 2011, the Mexican State had not reformed the military justice system.

2/ See Database of the President's Office at <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/base-de-datos-de-fallecimientos/>.

kidnappings of migrants continued³. In August 2010, in Tamaulipas State, a mass grave was discovered containing the bodies of 72 migrants from Central and South America. As of April 2011, other mass graves had been discovered in Tamaulipas and Durango. The United Nations (UN) Committee for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families expressed its deep concern at “the alarming number of cases of kidnapping and extortion of undocumented migrant workers and [...] the acts of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, disappearances and killings of these migrants”. Although many of the reported crimes were perpetrated by organised criminal groups, the Committee also expressed its concern about the multiple cases in which public officials had participated⁴.

In terms of freedom of expression, despite the under-registering of cases, it is estimated that in 2010, there were 139 acts of aggression carried out against journalists and 21 against the media throughout 25 States within the country⁵. Dr. Catalina Botero and Mr. Frank La Rue, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and UN Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression, held a joint visit to Mexico from August 9 to 24, 2010, during which they concluded that Mexico is the most dangerous country to be a journalist in the Americas, and highlighted the number of killings of journalists and other serious acts of violence against those who disseminate information and opinion, and the generalised impunity in these cases⁶.

Meanwhile, the Office in Mexico of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) presented a report to update the situation of human rights defenders in Mexico, in which they identified

3/ The National Commission of Human Rights (*Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos - CNDH*) observed that between April and September 2010, at least 11,333 migrants were kidnapped in 214 mass kidnappings (67.4% of the kidnappings occurred in the south-east of the country, 29.2% in the north and 2.2% in the centre). See CNDH Report, *Informe Especial sobre secuestro en perjuicio de migrantes en México*, February 22, 2011.

4/ See Committee for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families, *Concluding Observations of the Committee for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families - Mexico*, UN Document CMW/C/MEX/CO/2, May 3, 2011.

5/ See Centre for Journalism and Public Ethics (*Centro de Periodismo y Ética Pública*) Report, *De la autocensura a la interlocución con los victimarios. Situación de la libertad de expresión en México 2010*, March 2011.

6/ See IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression and UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, *Joint Official Visit to Mexico. Preliminary Observations*, August 24, 2010; IACHR, *Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Dr. Catalina Botero*, Organisation of American States Document OAS/Ser.L/V/II Doc 5, March 7, 2011 and Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Frank La Rue - Addendum, Mission to Mexico*, UN Document A/HRC/17/27/Add.3, May 19, 2011.

Chihuahua, Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca as the States with the highest number of acts of aggression against defenders in the country. OHCHR also drew attention to the “lack of or poor progress in revealing the authors [...] of these aggressions”. Equally, OHCHR highlighted a new element for concern, namely the fact that many defenders are forced to abandon their places of living because of hostility to their work in the defence of human rights⁷. In light of this, and thanks to the efforts of civil society, at the end of 2010, a dialogue with the Government was initiated for the implementation of a governmental protection mechanism for human rights defenders. Nevertheless, by April 2011, this had not been agreed upon and the dialogue had been suspended.

On a more favourable note, during 2010 and 2011, important legislative progress was made. It is important to highlight the constitutional reform on human rights which among other things, establishes constitutional status to international human rights treaties⁸. Also, on May 27, 2010, the Mexican Supreme Court approved a norm in favour of women’s rights, under which all Mexican States must provide victims of sexual violence with emergency contraception and access to abortion. In August 2010, the same Court also approved a law granting the right of same sex couples to get married in the Federal District, which must be recognised by all States within the country.

Assassinations and harassment against defenders who denounce violations carried out by the armed forces

Serious attacks continued throughout 2010 and 2011 against defenders who denounce human rights violations carried out by the armed forces. On January 3, 2010, human rights defender Ms. **Josefina Reyes** was assassinated, after denouncing abuses committed by the Mexican army in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua State. As of April 2011, this murder remained in impunity. Also in Ciudad Juárez, Ms. **Emilia González Tercero**, Co-founder of the Commission for Solidarity and Human Rights Defence (*Comisión de Solidaridad y Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, A.C.* - COSYDDHAC), once again suffered acts of harassment and intimidation after she made a number of public declarations about military abuses and reported this to the IACHR⁹. On July 27, 2010, ten uniformed, armed soldiers arrived at her home and handed her a summons to make a statement about a report

7/ See OHCHR, *Actualización 2010. Informe sobre la situación de las y los defensores de derechos humanos en México*, November 2010.

8/ The reform was approved by the Chamber of Deputies on December 15, 2010, by the Chamber of Senate on March 8, 2011 and by the State Legislatures on May 18, 2011.

9/ Since January 2010, Ms. González Tercero has been the legal representative in the case of the enforced disappearance of Ms. Nitzá Paola Alvarado, Ms. Rocío Alvarado and Mr. José Ángel Alvarado. Due to the risk she faces as legal representative in the case, the IACHR granted her precautionary measures on March 4, 2010.

that she had supposedly made against the military¹⁰. In a similar case, on September 14, 2010, six armed men took by force Mr. **Víctor Ayala Tapia**, President of the Hermenegildo Galeana Freedom Front (*Frente Libre Hermenegildo Galeana* - FLHG), a peasant organisation that promotes small agricultural projects in Tecpan, Guerrero State. Mr. Ayala had on a number of occasions denounced acts of corruption committed by public officials and abuses by the military¹¹. On September 23, 2010, Mr. Ayala Tapia's family reported this crime officially before the Public Ministry in Tecpan, and on September 26, 2010, filed an official complaint before the Human Rights Commission in Guerrero State. As of April 2011, Mr. Ayala Tapia's whereabouts were still unknown. Also subjected to threats and harassment on repeated occasions were Ms. **Silvia Vázquez Camacho**, a member of the Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights (*Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos A.C.* - CMDPDH), and Ms. **Blanca Margarita Mesina Nevarez**, representative in the case of 25 police officers who were submitted to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by soldiers in the city of Tijuana, Baja California State. In February 2010, both defenders received telephone death threats. In March and April 2010, Ms. Vázquez was followed on two occasions and threatened by a masked man. In May 2010, Ms. Mesina Nevarez was threatened when a firearm was placed to her head. These events were denounced before the federal and State authorities, who granted precautionary measures in favour of Ms. Mesina Nevarez and Ms. Vázquez Camacho. Nevertheless, these measures were not implemented effectively, forcing the two defenders to move to Mexico City on May, 31 2010. After six months, Ms. Mesina Nevarez returned to the city of Tijuana. However, as of April 2011, Ms. Vázquez Camacho was still living in Mexico City because she considered that security measures were not favourable to enable her return to Tijuana.

Furthermore, no progress was made in the investigations into two attacks that occurred in August and November 2009, against Ms. **Mercedes Murillo Monge**, President of the Sinaloa Civic Front (*Frente Cívico Sinaloense*), and Mr. **Salomón Monárrez Meraz**, Director of the same organisation, which has over recent years denounced abuses committed by the military during "operations" against organised crime. For his part,

10 / Ms. González Tercero had not made any formal denouncement, however the soldiers referred to an article published by the news agency *CIMAC* about events that occurred on June 17, 2009, when a group of soldiers arrived at her home to interrogate her on suspicion of possessing explosives, weapons or rocket launchers, tried to enter her home without a warrant and threatened her.

11 / For example, on April 13, 2010, he denounced that officers from the Mexican navy violently burst into the community of La Ola, wearing hoods and with the number plates of their vehicles covered. They then carried out a search to look for weapons, but did not find any, and they beat two minors.

Mr. **Gustavo de la Rosa Hickerson**, an Inspector for the Chihuahua Human Rights Commission (*Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Chihuahua*), who had been obliged to leave Ciudad Juárez in 2009 due to risks he suffered because of his investigations into abuses committed by the military, continued to live in el Paso, Texas, and to cross the border every day to carry out his work in Ciudad Juárez.

Assassinations, attacks and threats against women's rights defenders

In 2010 and 2011, violence continued against women human rights defenders, in particular against those who denounced disappearances and killings of women in Chihuahua State. On December 16, 2010, Ms. **Marisela Escobedo Ortiz** was assassinated. Ms. Ortiz was a defender working with the support of "Justice for Our Daughters" (*Justicia para Nuestras Hijas*), an organisation that fights against impunity in cases of femicide in Chihuahua. Ms. Marisela Escobedo Ortiz was struggling to achieve justice in the case of her daughter, who was killed in August 2008 by Mr. Sergio Rafael Barraza, who confessed to the crime and who was still at large as of April 2011, meaning that the crime remained unpunished. Similarly, several members of "May Our Daughters Return Home" (*Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa* - NHRC), an organisation that accompanies the families of disappeared women in the area of Ciudad Juárez, continued to be subjected to threats and attacks. On February 16, 2011, an arson attempt was carried out against a property owned by Ms. **María Luisa Andrade**, NHRC Director of Legal Affairs. The fire did not spread thanks to the intervention of fire fighters. Due to the climate of insecurity, on February 18, 2011, Ms. María Luisa Andrade abandoned her home and moved to Mexico City, where she was still living as of April 2011. Likewise, the Founder and Director General of NHRC, Ms. **Marisela Ortiz Rivera**, received death threats against her and her family in March 2011, after which she decided to move with her family. Both Ms. Marisela Ortiz Rivera and Ms. María Luisa Andrade were granted precautionary measures by the IACHR in June 2008. The attempted arson attack and threats were denounced before the Special Attorney for Crimes Against Women and before the Human Rights Commission in Chihuahua State. Yet, as of April 2011, no results had been reported in the investigations. For her part, by April 2011, Ms. **Rosa Isela Pérez Torres**, a journalist who had published a number of reports on femicide in Ciudad Juárez and an expert witness in the "Campo Algodonero" case¹², was still living in exile

12/ In this case, the IACTHR condemned the Mexican State, on November 16, 2009, for the disappearance and subsequent death of the young women Ms. Claudia Ivette González, Ms. Esmeralda Herrera Monreal and Ms. Laura Berenice Ramos Monárrez, whose bodies were found in a cotton field in Ciudad Juárez on November 6, 2001.

in Spain together with her family, after having been forced to leave Ciudad Juárez in August 2009, because of serious threats against her.

Assassinations, threats and harassment against defenders of indigenous peoples and peasants communities

In 2010 and 2011, indigenous leaders and defenders of indigenous peoples' rights continued to suffer attacks related to their work. On April 27, 2010, a human rights observation mission, composed of fifty people in support of the population of San Juan Copala, in the Triqui region of Oaxaca State, was violently attacked by armed men belonging to the paramilitary group calling themselves "Unity and Social Wellbeing in the Triqui Region" (*Unidad y Bienestar Social de la Región Triqui - UBISORT*). During the attack, Ms. **Beatriz Alberta Cariño Trujillo**, a member of Working Together - Centre for Community Support (*Centro de Apoyo Comunitario Trabajando Unidos - CACTUS*)¹³, and Mr. **Jyry Antero Jaakkola**, a Finnish international observer, were assassinated, and another seven people were injured. Investigations were initiated by the National Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos - CNDH*), and the Public Prosecutor's office. However, by April 2011, there were no results in these investigations.

Meanwhile, on February 12, 2010, in Guerrero State, legal proceedings were finally closed against Messrs. **Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez**, **Braulio Manzanares Lorenzo**, **José Eugenio Cruz**, **Félix Ortega Dolores** and **Merced Santiago Lorenzo**. These members of the Me'phaa Indigenous People's Organisation (*Organización del Pueblo Indígena Me'phaa - OPIM*), had been accused of having planned the murder of an army informer, in Ayutla de los Libres. However, although OPIM member, Mr. **Raúl Hernández Abundio**, had been arrested for the events described above, it was not until August 27, 2010 that the Mixed Court of First Instance issued its sentence acquitting him, after two years and four months spent in arbitrary detention. Threats and attacks against OPIM members continued. In particular, Ms. **Obtilia Eugenio Manuel**, President of the OPIM, and Mr. Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez received constant death threats throughout 2010. This climate of insecurity and the lack of implementation of effective protection measures caused Ms. Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and Mr. Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez to leave Guerrero State. In spite of this, on November 28, 2010, both received written threats in their new home. As of April 2011, Ms. Obtilia Eugenio Manuel and Mr. Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez had not been

13/ An organisation that works on grassroots alternative educational projects, indigenous rights and women's rights.

able to return to their community for security reasons. The threats against OPIM members, who were granted provisional measures by the IACtHR in 2009, were denounced before the authorities. Nevertheless, as of April 2011, although fourteen investigations had been opened in relation to these complaints, there were no results. Equally, as of April 2011, the case of the extrajudicial execution of Mr. **Lorenzo Fernández Ortega**, a member of OPIM who was found dead on February 10, 2008, and the case of the enforced disappearance and extrajudicial execution in February 2009 of Messrs. **Raúl Lucas Lucía** and **Manuel Ponce Rosas**, respectively President and Secretary of the Organisation for the Future of the Mixteca People (*Organización por el Futuro del Pueblo Mixteca* - OFPM), continued in impunity.

Meanwhile, in Chiapas State, Mr. **Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz**, a member of the “Connection, Communication and Training” organisation (*Enlace, Comunicación y Capacitación* - Enlace CC)¹⁴, and his wife Ms. Margarita Guadalupe Martínez continued to suffer threats and acts of harassment. In January 2010, they received telephone and written threats in their home. On February 26, 2010, Ms. Guadalupe Martínez was kidnapped for several hours and threatened with death¹⁵. On November 24, 2010, she was once again accosted by unknown individuals, after meeting with an official from OHCHR. In spite of a complaint lodged before the Attorney General Specialised in the Protection of Human Rights NGOs, as of April 2011, the necessary investigations had not been carried out nor had corresponding measures been taken to put an end to the threats. Moreover, the members of the “Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas” Human Rights Centre (*Centro de Derechos Humanos “Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas” A.C.* - Frayba)¹⁶ continued to be subjected to smear campaigns, such as during the demonstration held on October 1, 2010, in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, in which Mr. **Diego Cadenas Gordillo**, then Director of Frayba, was accused of being a spokesperson for armed groups. Moreover, as of April 2011, the judicial proceedings had not advanced against members of the paramilitary group Organisation for the Defence of Indigenous and Peasants Rights (*Organización para la Defensa de los Derechos Indígenas y Campesinos* - OPDDIC), who in 2009 attacked Mr. **Ricardo Lagunes**, a lawyer from

14/ Enlace CC is an organisation that facilitates local sustainable development processes in indigenous and peasants regions in the centre and south of Mexico. They have offices in Mexico city and Chiapas.

15/ The threats made reference to a criminal complaint initiated by the couple, on November 23, 2009, against officials from the Chiapas Government for crimes of “abuse of authority”, “raids”, “psychological torture” and “aggravated death threats”.

16/ Organisation that works for the promotion and defence of the human rights of indigenous peoples in Chiapas State.

Frayba¹⁷. Also in Chiapas State, judicial harassment continued, representing yet another way in which defenders were intimidated. On February 22, 2011, Mr. **Nataniel Hernández Núñez**, Director of the “Digna Ochoa” Human Rights Centre (*Centro de Derechos Humanos “Digna Ochoa”*), together with Messrs. **José María Martínez Cruz** and **Eduardo Alonso Martínez Silva**, lawyers and members of the same centre, were arrested and accused of “rioting” and “offences against the peace and the collective integrity and heritage of the State”, to which were later added the crimes of “extortion” and “obstruction of lines of communication”. These charges were related to events of February 22, 2011, when a road was blockaded in protests calling for the release of ten peasants from San Sebastián Bachajón. On March 2, 2011, the three defenders were conditionally released. Nevertheless, on March 15, 2011, Mr. Hernández Núñez was again arrested before being released on bail the following day. As of April 2011, the proceedings against Messrs. Hernández Núñez, Martínez Cruz and Martínez Silva remained pending.

Assassinations, threats and judicial harassment against environmental defenders

In 2010 and 2011, defenders of the environment and natural resources continued to be the victims of killings, threats and harassment despite condemnation of the Mexican State by the IACtHR for human rights violations against Messrs. **Rodolfo Montiel** and **Teodoro Cabrera**, defenders of the forests in Guerrero State, for events that occurred in 1999¹⁸. On April 28, 2010, Mr. **Rubén Flores Hernández** was assassinated. He was a peasant who defended the environment and who had denounced illegal logging in the Coajomulco community, in Morelos State. After his death, threats continued against any person who denounced clandestine logging and the theft of wood in the region. For instance, anonymous messages appeared in Coajomulco, which said “Community vigilantes will fall one by one”¹⁹. Equally, on April 7, 2010, Mr. **Francisco Jiménez Pablo**, leader of the Regional Independent Peasants’ Movement (*Movimiento Campesino Regional Independiente - MOCRI*) and a member of the National Council of Rural and Fishing Organisations (*Consejo Nacional*

17/ After the attack, Mr. Juan Cruz Méndez, Ms. Guadalupe Cruz Méndez, Mr. Rogelio Cruz Méndez and Mr. Agustín Hernández Sántiz were held in custody in the State Centre No. 14 for the Social Reintegration of Prisoners, in El Amate (CERSS No.14) on November 3, 2009, accused of “illegal deprivation of freedom”, “attempted homicide” and “causing injury”. However, they were released on November 11, 2009 under the legal figure of “binding over the defendant for trial” and as no further progress was made.

18/ See IACtHR Sentence, *Case of Cabrera García and Montiel Flores vs. México*, November 26, 2010.

19/ See Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Centre (*Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez - Centro PRODH*) and Mexican League for the Defence of Human Rights (*Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos - LIMEDDH*).

de Organismos Rurales y Pesqueros - CONORP), was arbitrarily arrested by the Public Prosecutor's office in Chiapas State, accused of having captured an official from the Mexican Bureau of Agriculture, Cattle Farming, Rural Development, Fishing and Foods (*Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación de México* - SEGARPA), which allegedly took place in 1999²⁰. As of April 2011, Mr. Jiménez Pablo remained held in the federal prison "El Rincón", in Nayarit, far from his family and place of residence in Chiapas. Moreover, Messrs. **Juan Agustín** and **Manuel de Jesús Carvajal Jiménez**, brothers and members of the Committee to Save Temaca, Acasico and Palmarejo (*Comité Salvemos Temaca, Acasico y Palmarejo*), Mr. **Marco Joachim von Borstel Nilsson**, a member of the Mexican Institute for Community Development (*Instituto Mexicano para el Desarrollo Comunitario* - IMDEC), and Ms. **Jade Ramírez**, a journalist on the Guadalajara university radio station, were threatened after participating in a meeting on April 3, 2010, organised by the Committee to Save Temaca, Acasico and Palmarejo (*Comité Salvemos Temaca, Acasico y Palmarejo*), in the municipality of Cañadas de Obregón, Jalisco State, to protest against the el Zapotillo dam project due to the social and environmental consequences it poses. These threats were denounced before the authorities. However by April 2011 there were no results in the investigations. Moreover, Mr. **Jorge Arzave Orihuela**, a member of the Association of Proactive Neighbours (*Asociación de Vecinos Propositivos*) in Lomas de San Francisco Tepojaco, a group dedicated to promoting the right to a dignified life and a healthy environment in Lomas de Cuautitlán, Mexico State, was the victim of telephone threats in August and October 2010. These threats were denounced before the Public Prosecutor's office and the Human Rights Commission, both in Mexico State. The local authorities granted precautionary measures in favour of Mr. Arzave Orihuela and his family, but these were not adequately implemented, leading to a complaint being made before the National Human Rights Commission. Nevertheless, as of April 2011, Mr. Arzave Orihuela had not yet benefitted from sufficient protection and the investigation had not progressed with the due diligence required²¹.

In relation to the assassination on November 27, 2009 of Mr. **Mariano Abarca**, a member of the Mexican Network of People Affected by Mining (*Red Mexicana de Afectados por la Minería* - REMA) and active in

20/ The arbitrary detention of Mr. Jiménez Pablo occurred after a peaceful march and procession organised by CONORP members to denounce persecution and repeated harassment against its members, as well as to demand the release of members of CONORP and other organisations arrested on false charges in the States of Chiapas, Veracruz and Hidalgo.

denouncing environmental effects caused by the Canadian mining company “Blackfire Exploration Ltd”, in Chiapas, as of April 2011, the people presumed to have committed this crime had been arrested. Nevertheless, the company had denied any responsibility in the crime. Moreover, as of April 2011, the killing of Mr. **Aurelio Díaz Hernández** still remained unpunished as did the attack against Messrs. **Javier Gómez Heredia**, **José Heredia** and **Fernando Heredia**, members of the Other Campaign (*Otra Campaña*) who opposed the construction of the San Cristóbal de las Casas - Palenque motorway, in Chiapas. These two men were injured in an attack on July 21, 2009, by members of the paramilitary group known as God’s Army (*Ejército de Dios*)²².

Threats against defenders of migrants rights and journalists who denounce the situation of migrants

Defenders and journalists who document and denounce the conditions of migrants carried out their work in highly precarious conditions. On July 17, 2010, the journalist Mr. **Ireneo Mújica Arzate** was arrested together with eighteen migrants in Soltepec, Puebla State, during an operation of the National Institute of Migration (*Instituto Nacional de Migración* - INM). Mr. Mújica refused to hand over material he had been filming to document the situation of migrants, for which he was beaten by five members of the INM who took his money, his video camera and his mobile phone. The journalist was abandoned in Soltepec with no money and no way of communicating. Once he managed to get to Puebla, the journalist began a hunger strike and chained himself to the INM building. However, a municipal police patrol arrested him for “disturbing the peace”, and took the rest of his belongings, his passport and his personal papers. Although Mr. Mújica Arzate was later released because of the lack of evidence against him, his belongings were not returned to him. Meanwhile, Ms. **Guadalupe Calzada Sánchez**, Coordinator of the San Juan Diego Migrant’s House (*Casa del Migrante San Juan Diego*) in Lechería district, Tultitlan, Mexico State, and dedicated to the protection and assistance of migrants, was attacked on January 30, 2011 by an unknown assailant, and in February 2011, she received death threats. As of April 2011, these acts remained unpunished. Similarly, Mr. **Ignacio Muñoz Zamora**, Director of the legal team in the “Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini” Migrants Human Rights Centre (*Centro de Derechos Humanos del Migrante “Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini”*) and member of the Northern Border Initiative (*Iniciativa Frontera Norte*), in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas State, was also the victim of verbal acts of aggression and threats on repeated occasions during

22/ At the end of 2009, one person had been arrested for their presumed responsibility in the attack, however this person was released and no further progress was made.

2010 and 2011. In October and November 2010, Mr. Muñiz Zamora was accosted by unknown individuals who questioned him about his work with migrants. On March 22, 2011, he was threatened with a firearm and the two laptop computers and radio he was carrying were stolen. He lodged a complaint before the Public Ministry in Nuevo Laredo, however by April 2011, there were no results in the investigations. Moreover, on April 9, 2011, Father **Gianantonio Baggio**, Director of the “Beato Juan Bautista Scalabrini” Migrants Human Rights Centre, received telephone threats. These threats were denounced before the local authorities, after which the police visited the shelter. However, as of April 2011, the Centre’s protection continued to be insufficient. In another case, on March 23, 2010, the IACHR granted precautionary measures to Father **Alejandro Solalinde**, Director of the Brothers Along the Road Migrant Shelter (*Albergue del Migrante Hermanos en el Camino*) in Ixtepec, Oaxaca State, and Father **Pedro Pantoja Arreola**, Director of the Belén Posada Migrant Shelter (*Albergue Belén Posada del Migrante*) in Saltillo, Coahuila State, and his team of workers, due to the fact that acts of harassment and the situation of risk in which they carry out their work had not improved²³.

Harassment against journalists who denounce human rights violations, impunity and acts of corruption

Independent journalists who published articles in 2010 and 2011 denouncing human rights violations, impunity and corruption, continued to live in a situation which was cause for concern. For example, the members of the *Contralínea* magazine continued to suffer harassment, including at a judicial level. On April 10 and 11, 2010, the offices of the magazine were raided and accounting and journalistic documentation, computers and mobile phones were stolen. This theft was just one event in a series of acts of harassment which these journalists have suffered since 2007 for their work denouncing issues related to national security, governmental corruption, drug trafficking, money laundering, and social issues related to poverty and marginalisation. These events were denounced to the Public Ministry, who opened a case file. Nevertheless, as of April 2011, there were no results in the investigation. Moreover, on January 3, 2011, Civil Judge No. 54 from the Federal District sentenced Mr. **Miguel Badillo**, Director of the *Contralínea* magazine, journalist Ms. **Ana Lilia Pérez** and other members of *Contralínea* to permanently stop the publication of certain kinds of information, arguing that *Contralínea* journalists had fallen into “abusive use of their freedom of expression” after the publication of articles related to the use of Government resources. This decision was revoked on

April 14, 2011 by the Superior Court of Justice in the Federal District High Court²⁴.

Meanwhile, the 2009 assassinations of three journalists who denounced corruption, the abuse of authority and links to drug trafficking remained in impunity as of April 2011. These journalists were Messrs. **Eliseo Barrón Hernández**, of the daily newspaper *La Opinión de Torreón*, **Carlos Ortega Melo Samper**, of *El Tiempo* in Durango, and **Norberto Miranda Madrid “El Gallito”**, Director of the online newspaper *Radio Visión*.

Urgent Interventions issued by The Observatory from January 2010 to April 2011

Names	Violations / Follow-up	Reference	Date of Issuance
Ms. Josefina Reyes, Ms. Cipriana Jurado, Mr. Gustavo de La Rosa and Mr. Gero Fong	Assassination	Urgent Appeal MEX 001/0110/OBS 004	January 8, 2010
Mr. Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz and his family	Death threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 013/1209/OBS 193.1	January 11, 2010
	Harassment / Death threats / Attack	Urgent Appeal MEX 013/1209/OBS 193.2	March 2, 2010
Mr. Adolfo Guzmán Ordaz and his family, Mr. Diego Cadenas	Attack / Death threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 013/1209/OBS 193.3	November 26, 2010
Mr. Lorenzo Fernández Ortega, Mr. Raúl Hernández Abundio, Ms. Obtilia Eugenio Manuel / Me'phaa Indigenous People's Organisation (OPIM)	Extrajudicial execution / Impunity	Press Release	February 17, 2010
Messrs. Cuauhtémoc Ramírez Rodríguez, Manzanares Lorenzo, José Eugenio Cruz, Félix Ortega Dolores, Raúl Hernández Abundio and Ms. Merced Santiago Lorenzo / OPIM	Judicial harassment / Arbitrary detention	Urgent Appeal MEX 004/0309/OBS 055.2	February 24, 2010
Ms. Obtilia Eugenio Manuel	Death threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 004/0309/OBS 055.3	March 18, 2010
Messrs. Raúl Hernández Abundio, Natalio Ortega Cruz, Romualdo Santiago Enequina, Orlando Manzanares, Lorenzo Manuel Cruz Victoriano and Ms. Obtilia Eugenio Manuel	Arbitrary detention		April 19, 2010

24 / Since 2007, the International Communications Media Corporation (*Corporativo Internacional de Medios de Comunicación*), which edits the magazine *ContraLinea*, as well as its Director and the journalist Ana Lilia Pérez, have been sued by business groups who were affected by reports in the magazine on corruption and the irregular awarding of contracts. In September 2009, the CNDH considered that the cases against Mr. Badillo, Ms. Pérez and the members of *ContraLinea* magazine were forms of censorship of freedom of expression and granted them precautionary measures.

Names	Violations / Follow-up	Reference	Date of Issuance
Mr. Raúl Hernández Abundio	Arbitrary detention	Closed Letter to the authorities	July 5, 2010
		Open Letter to the authorities	August 1, 2010
		Press Release	August 10, 2010
	Acquittal / Release	Press Release	August 31, 2010
Mr. Álvaro Ramírez Concepción and Mr. Raúl Hernández Abundio	Assassination attempt / Attack	Urgent Appeal MEX 013/0910/OBS 107	September 3, 2010
Ms. Silvia Vázquez Camacho and Ms. Blanca Margarita Mesina Nevarez	Threats / Harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 002/0310/OBS 027	March 3, 2010
	Threats / Harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 002/0310/OBS 0271	April 21, 2010
Ms. Blanca Margarita Mesina Nevarez	New death threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 002/0310/OBS 0272	May 21, 2010
<i>Contralínea</i> magazine / Mr. Miguel Badillo and Ms. Ana Lilia Pérez	Raid and theft from offices	Urgent Appeal MEX 003/0410/OBS 046	April 16, 2010
Mr. Alejandro Cerezo Contreras	Surveillance and monitoring	Urgent Appeal MEX 004/0410/OBS 047	April 16, 2010
Mr. Francisco Jiménez Pablo	Arbitrary detention / Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 005/0411/OBS 048	April 16, 2010
Mr. Juan Agustín Carvajal Jiménez, Mr. Manuel de Jesús Carvajal Jiménez, Mr. Marco Joeachim von Borstel Nilsson and Ms. Jade Ramírez	Death threats / Harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 006/0410/OBS 049	April 21, 2010
Unifying Movement to Struggle for an Independent Triqui Region (MULTI), Oaxaca Voices Building Autonomy and Freedom (VOCAL), Mexican Alliance for Peoples' Self-Determination (AMAP), National Education Workers' Trade Union (SNTE), Grassroots Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO), Working Together Centre for Community Support (CACTUS), Network of Indigenous Radio Stations and Communicators from the South of Mexico / Messrs. Jyry Antero Jaakkola, David Venegas Reyes, David Cilia García, Fernando Santiago, Martin Sautan and Ms. Éricka Ramírez Padilla, Ms. Beatriz Alberta Cariño Trujillo, Ms. Mónica Citlali Santiago Ortiz and Ms. Noé Bautista Jiménez	Attack / Assassinations	Press Release	April 29, 2010
Mr. Jyry Antero Jaakkola and Ms. Beatriz Alberta Cariño Trujillo	Impunity	Closed Letter to the authorities	April 8, 2011

Names	Violations / Follow-up	Reference	Date of Issuance
Mr. Jaime López Vela	Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 007/0510/OBS 061	May 12, 2010
Mr. Nataniel Hernández Núñez	Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 008/0610/OBS 077	June 17, 2010
Messrs. Nataniel Hernández Núñez, José María Martínez Cruz and Eduardo Alonso Martínez Silva	Arbitrary detention / Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 005/0211/OBS 027	February 25, 2011
	Release / Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 005/0211/OBS 027.1	March 8, 2011
	Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 005/0211/OBS 027.2	March 31, 2011
Father Martín	Physical aggression / Arbitrary detention / Judicial harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 009/0611/OBS 080	June 28, 2010
	Slander	Open Letter to the authorities	July 1, 2010
Mr. Ireneo Mújica Arzate	Detention / Physical aggression	Urgent Appeal MEX 010/0710/OBS 091	July 28, 2010
Mr. José León Rivera	Aggression / Arbitrary detention / Release	Urgent Appeal MEX 010/0810/OBS 094	August 5, 2010
Ms. Emilia González Tercero	Harassment / Intimidation	Urgent Appeal MEX 012/0810/OBS 103	August 20, 2010
Mr. Víctor Ayala Tapia	Detention / Forced disappearance	Urgent Appeal MEX 014/1010/OBS 122	October 8, 2010
		Press Release / Report to update an international fact-finding mission	December 21, 2010
Ms. Marisela Escobedo Ortiz	Assassination	Press Release	December 22, 2010
Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the People (CODEP), Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights (CODEM) and Regional Indigenous Centre for Human Rights (CRIDH) / Mr. Cástulo López, Mr. Patrocinio Martínez, Mr. Fredy Martínez, Mr. Dzahui Bautista, Mr. Ernesto López and Ms. Claudia Tapia and Ms. María del Carmen López	Acts of intimidation	Urgent Appeal MEX 001/0111/OBS 005	January 18, 2011
Centre for Workers' Support / Mr. Enrique Morales Montaña, Ms. Coral Juárez Melo and Ms. María Luisa Rosina	Threats / Acts of harassment	Urgent Appeal MEX 002/0111/OBS 006	January 21, 2011
Ms. Guadalupe Calzada Sánchez	Death threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 003/0211/OBS 019	February 15, 2011
Ms. María Luisa García Andrade and Ms. Marisela Ortiz Rivera	Attack	Urgent Appeal MEX 004/0211/OBS 023	February 22, 2011
	Death Threats	Press Release	March 16, 2011
Mr. Ignacio Muñiz Zamora	Theft / Threats	Urgent Appeal MEX 006/0411/OBS 058	April 5, 2011