



Joint public statement

International Organisations urge Mexican authorities to guarantee the security and integrity of relatives of the disappeared students of Ayotzinapa and of their representatives

16 de marzo de 2015 – Several international organizations express deep concern regarding recent reports according to which, members of the Tlachinollan Human Rights Centre, as well as other human rights organisations and the families and friends of the 43 disappeared students from Ayotzinapa, continue to suffer security incidents, putting their physical and psychological integrity at risk.

Over the past months, they have been the target of defamatory articles or statements in the media and by authorities from the state of Guerrero which have tried to link them to subversive groups. Similarly, acts of aggression, regular surveillance and intimidation by different state security forces during their peaceful protests have been reported by the families and the human rights defenders who accompany them. These events are part of a broader context of increased restrictions on the right to protest and freedom of expression in Mexico.

“Defamation, stigmatization, surveillance and acts of aggression place both the family members of the 43 disappeared students, and the HRDs who accompany them at increased risk and serve to obstruct their legitimate work in the search for truth” pointed out representatives of the international organizations.

In this context, the signing organizations urge the Mexican state to:

- Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of the human rights defenders involved in the case as well as the family members of the 43 disappeared students, permitting them to continue in their fight for justice and against impunity.
- Continue to investigate the events that occurred in Iguala on 26 – 27 September, establishing with conclusive scientific proof, the whereabouts of the disappeared students, as well as establishing the alleged involvement of the authorities at all levels in these incidents and the chain of command of such authorities.

- Facilitate the work of all independent international experts working on the case
- Guarantee the protection of all human rights defenders, including through statements of recognition of their legitimacy, the sanctioning of all aggressions against them, the implementation of adequate protective measures for victims and the full implementation of the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists.

As it is public knowledge, in February 2015, the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances highlighted the numerous cases and reports it has received which described threats and attacks against relatives of disappeared persons and human rights defenders working on this issue. The UN has furthermore highlighted the persistent climate of violence, hostility and insecurity in which human rights defenders work in Mexico.

See the open letter sent by international organizations to the Mexican authorities:

- On the OMCT website: <http://www.omct.org/human-rights-defenders/statements/mexico/2015/03/d23043/>
- On the FIDH website: <https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/150313openletterayotzi.pdf>