

URGENT ACTION

MEXICAN ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNER SHOT

Male environmentalist Jesús Sánchez de la Barquera has been shot and wounded outside his home in Mexico State, near the Mexican capital, Mexico City. He had been threatened and told to stop his campaigning for the defence of woodlands and for the right of local people to be informed and consulted about the use of their lands.

Early on 29 September, **Jesús Sánchez** set out to accompany his daughter to a nearby bus stop when he was shot by a man who had been waiting in a car outside his home in Jilotzingo municipality. The bullet went through Jesús Sánchez's shoulder. He has since recovered and has now been discharged from hospital. However, the lives of Jesús Sánchez and his family are at risk as they have received death threats on several occasions.

Jesús Sánchez is a well-known environmental activist who has led his community to defend local woodlands from illegal and excessive building of residential homes and commercial buildings. He has often campaigned publicly and pursued complaints in the courts against the actions taken by community representatives, highlighting their inadequate consultation with inhabitants and illegal use of land. On several occasions the courts have ruled in his favour, and as a result he and his family have been threatened. On 12 October, men supporting the local representatives shouted at Jesus Sanchez's daughter: "Are you still here? Don't you get it? Go to hell!" (Siguen aqui? Que no entienden? Vayanse a la chingada).

In March 2008 another local environmentalist was shot and killed after receiving threats. Lawyer Fernando Mayén Sánchez had been representing a group of Jilotzingo inhabitants, including Jesus Sánchez and his family, opposing the opening of a landfill site on their communal lands, adjacent to water springs and a dam. No one has been brought to justice for his killing.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- √ calling on the authorities to investigate the threats against and shooting of Jesús Sánchez de la Barquera and bring those responsible to justice;
- √ urging them to provide effective protection for Jesús Sánchez and his family, in accordance with their wishes;
- √ calling on the authorities to carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the killing of Fernando Mayén Sánchez and bring those responsible to justice;
- √ reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without obstacles or fear of reprisals.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 NOVEMBER 2009 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont
 Secretario de Gobernación
 Secretaría de Gobernación
 Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez
 Delegación Cuauhtémoc
 México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414
E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Salutation: Señor Secretario/
Dear Minister

Governor of Mexico State

Lic. Enrique Peña Nieto
 Gobernador del Estado de México
 Lerdo Poniente Número 300,
 Palacio Del Poder Ejecutivo,
 Col. Centro, Toluca 50000
 Estado de México, MEXICO
Fax: +52 722 276 0046
Email: gob@gem.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Governor/ Señor
Gobernador

Attorney General of Mexico State

Lic. Alberto Bazbaz Sacal
 Procurador del Estado de México
 Av. Morelos Ote. No. 1300, Piso 6
 Centro Estatal de Justicia
 Col. San Sebastián, Toluca 50090,
 Estado de México, MEXICO
Fax: +52 722 226 1600 ext. 3297
Salutation: Dear Attorney/ Señor
Procurador
Email: gemcpgj@mail.edomex.gob.mx

COPIES TO: "Fray Francisco de Vitoria O.P." Human rights centre, **Email: juridico@derechoshumanos.org.mx** and to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Human rights defenders in Mexico face threats, attacks, politically motivated criminal charges and imprisonment for leading protests or promoting respect for human rights. Activists working for the defence of economic, social and environmental rights are even more at risk as they are often not recognised for the work they do and are targeted by powerful interests.

The government has agreed to provide protection measures ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to several human rights defenders, but some have reported that no effective protection has been provided. Substantial efforts have not been made to investigate cases of abuses against human rights defenders; impunity is the general rule in these cases, leaving open the possibility of further attacks.

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