

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/013 /2009

9 March 2009

UA 64/09 Torture/ill-treatment/Fear for safety/Death threats

MEXICO Jesús Arturo Torres Parra (m), aged 18

Jesús Arturo Torres Parra was unlawfully detained, then beaten and threatened with death by federal police officers in Chihuahua City, Chihuahua state on 3 March. He was released a few hours later, though he fears that he and his family are at risk of further attacks.

According to Jesús Arturo Torres, on the evening of 3 March, he was at home with his family, when a group of uniformed Federal Preventive Police officers (Policía Federal Preventiva, PFP), smashed the front door and broke in. Without any explanation or warrant, they handcuffed him and bundled him into a pick up truck. Eyewitnesses noted that the vehicle had PFP markings and recorded the number plates which they later passed on to federal authorities. The PFP has the mandate and powers to combat organised crime nationwide.

Jesús Arturo Torres was then beaten and threatened for three hours inside the vehicle. During that time, he was questioned about individuals of whom he had no knowledge and has reported that one of the officers told him that “if you don’t tell us what we want to know, we will take you to Chapo Guzmán [a notorious drug trafficker and killer] so he’ll make you talk, or we will just kill you and dump you in the desert” (si no dices nada de lo que te preguntamos, te vamos a llevar con el Chapo Guzmán para que te haga hablar, o te matamos y te echamos al desierto). He was then released in a different part of Chihuahua City and threatened with death if he reported the incident.

The following day Jesús Arturo Torres filed a complaint with the Federal Attorney General’s Office (Procuraduría General de la República, PGR) in Chihuahua City and the Chihuahua State Human Rights Commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since 2007 organized crime related violence has spiralled in Mexico. In 2008, media reported that more than 5000 people were killed in violent incidents attributed to organized crime, at least 1500 of them in Chihuahua State alone. President Calderón’s administration has attempted to deal with the spiralling violent crime by deploying thousands of federal police and some 45000 military personnel in the worst affected areas. However this has not resulted in a reduction in crime - (in Chihuahua the governor requested federal intervention). Reports of unlawful killings, torture, arbitrary detentions and illegal house searches by members of the military and police personnel have increased, many of which fail to be adequately investigated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- urging the authorities to ensure that Jesús Arturo Torres Parra and his family are given appropriate protection, in accordance with their wishes, following the his unlawful detention and ill-treatment on 3 March by Federal Preventive Police;
- calling on the authorities to conduct an independent and impartial investigation into his apparent unlawful detention and ill-treatment and hold those responsible to account;
- calling for effective measures to ensure police and military anti-crime operations are carried out in accordance with the law and international human rights standards, and that any alleged abuses are promptly and impartially investigated.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza
Procurador General de la República
Procuraduría General de la República
Av. Paseo de la Reforma n° 211-213, Piso 16
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06500, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 53 46 09 08

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador General

Minister of Public Security

Lic. Genaro García Luna
Secretaría de Seguridad Pública
Constituyentes n° 947, edif. "B" planta alta, Col. Belén de las Flores, Del. Álvaro Obregón
México D.F., C.P. 01110, MÉXICO

Fax: (+52 55) 1103 6026 (if someone answers, say "me da tono de fax, por favor")

Email: genaro.garcia@ssp.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister

Minister of Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont Urueta
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso,
Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc,
México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5093 3414

E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx

Salutation: Señor Secretario/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Human Rights organization:

Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres A.C., Av. Juárez No. 4107 Col. Centro, Chihuahua, Chih., MÉXICO.

Human Rights Commission of Chihuahua

Lic. José Luis Armendáriz González
Presidente de la Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Chihuahua
Calle Décima y Mina, 1000, Col. Centro, C.P. 31000, Chihuahua, MÉXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 April 2009.