



## WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA

*Celebrating 30 years of promoting democracy, human rights and social justice in Latin America.*

Tuesday November 7, 2006

Vicente Fox Quesada  
Constitutional President of Mexico

Via Fax: (5255) 5277-2376

Distinguished President Fox,

We, the undersigned organizations, wish to express our concern for the situation of violence and instability in the state of Oaxaca.

We recognize the need to reestablish stability in the state. However, we regret that the recent police operation resulted in more deaths and increased human rights violations like illegal raids and the arbitrary detention of many persons.

We understand that these events occur within the framework of a long political and social conflict that various sectors of Oaxacan society have experienced with state authorities. In this regard, we express our concern that the federal government did not resolve the conflict by way of dialogue between the parties, but chose a police operation that has only created more chaos in the state and has not contributed to the resolution of the conflict.

Throughout the conflict, we have received testimonies of the existence of parapolice groups controlled by the state government that have committed grave human rights violations. For example, on Friday, October 27, armed groups attacked the barricades of members of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO). This attack resulted in the death of at least three people, including the American journalist, Bradley Roland Will.

In light of the above, we request the federal government to:

- **Investigate the aforementioned parapolice groups in depth to identify who participated in them, who administered the orders, and to assure that the crimes do not remain unpunished.**
- **Carry out effective investigations with respect to the human rights violations that occurred during the conflict, determine responsibility for these violations, and apply their respective sanctions.**
- **Guarantee the physical integrity and right of due process for the detained. Specifically, we urge particular care for those individuals who have been turned over to state authorities, as we do not believe that the current conditions allow these authorities to act with impartiality.**
- **Immediately suspend illegal raids, arbitrary detentions, and acts of intimidation against the protestors.**
- **Guarantee the right of association, expression, and freedom of assembly.**

We deplore all acts of violence. We strongly urge your government to promote dialogue and to continue seeking, together with the different actors in the state of Oaxaca, a negotiated and peaceful solution to the diverse social demands present in this conflict.

Sincerely,

34 organizations and individuals in the United States and other countries in the region who are concerned about the situation in Oaxaca.