

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST STABBED IN MEXICO

**A community activist in Mexico was attacked on 5 September as a result of his peaceful human rights work defending the right to fair access to water. He and other members of the environmental group he works for are at risk of further attacks.**

On 5 September **Vicente Moreno Domínguez**, a human rights activist in Coyotepec, Mexico state, was stabbed as he answered his door to two men and a women. According to Vicente Moreno Domínguez, one of the assailants told him, "This is a little gift...so you stop being an idiot" (*Esto es un regalito...para que no te sigas pasando de pendejo*). Vicente Moreno Domínguez is recovering from his injuries but his attackers have not been arrested.

Members of the community of Coyotepec have been opposing attempts by the municipal president to take over control of local water supplies, which they fear will result in the water being used for commercial purposes and reduce their access. Protesters have held a long-running demonstration outside the town hall and several of the activists have been attacked and threatened, including by armed men with apparent links to the municipal government.

On 1 July, **Alberto Cruz Luna**, one of the protesters, was shot and killed by a gunman who local activists say worked for the municipal government. On 7 July Vicente Moreno Domínguez, along with other local activists **Irma Luna Montoya**, **Ivonne González Cristóbal**, **Juan Cristóbal Martínez** and **Felipe Rodríguez Díaz**, requested protection measures from the federal Interior Ministry (*Secretaría de Gobernación*) mechanism for the protection of human right defenders and journalists. However, only "intermittent" federal police patrols of their houses were granted, which were insufficient to prevent the attack on Vicente Moreno Domínguez. So far no further steps have been taken to peacefully end the dispute over access to water, or to ensure the activists do not face further attacks.

### **Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling for full and immediate federal and state measures, in accordance with their wishes, to ensure the safety of water activists in Coyotepec, including Vicente Moreno Domínguez, Irma Luna Montoya, Ivonne González Cristóbal, Juan Cristóbal Martínez and Felipe Rodríguez Díaz;
- Calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the attack on Vicente Moreno Domínguez, the threats against other activists and the shooting of Alberto Cruz Luna, including any possible links to the municipal authorities, and for all those responsible to be brought to justice;
- Reminding the authorities of their obligation to protect human rights defenders and urging them to guarantee the rights of the Coyotepec community to fair access to water.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 OCTOBER 2013 TO:**

#### Governor Mexico state

Eruviel Ávila Villegas  
Lerdo Poniente No. 300  
Palacio del Poder Ejecutivo, Col. Centro,  
C.P. 5000, Toluca, Estado de México  
MÉXICO

Fax: 011 52 722 2760046

Email: [eruviel.avila@edomex.gob.mx](mailto:eruviel.avila@edomex.gob.mx)

Salutation: Dear Governor

#### Minister of Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong  
Secretario de Gobernación  
Bucareli 99, col. Juárez, C.P. 6600,  
México D.F.  
MÉXICO

Fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414 (keep trying)

Email: [secretario@segob.gob.mx](mailto:secretario@segob.gob.mx)

Salutation: Dear Minister

#### **And copies to:**

#### Human Rights Organization

Centro de Derechos Humanos Zeferino  
Ladrillo  
Email: [cdhzl.presidencia@gmail.com](mailto:cdhzl.presidencia@gmail.com)

#### **Also send copies to:**

Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Embassy of Mexico  
1911 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20006  
Fax: 1 202 728 1698 | Email: [mexembusa@sre.gob.mx](mailto:mexembusa@sre.gob.mx)

Please check with AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Local community activists who organize to defend their rights against powerful groups, often operating with the protection of municipal authorities, frequently face threats or harassment in reprisal for their work. In May 2012, José Ramón Aniceto Gómez and Pascual Agustín Cruz, were released after spending three years in jail on trumped up charges in reprisal for their work defending access to water in Atla, in the central state of Puebla.

A Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists was unanimously approved by both houses of Mexico's parliament, and signed by the President, in 2012. The process for implementing the law has now started, including the direct participation of representatives of civil society, but operational protocols, clear guidelines on cooperation between the federal and state authorities and resources urgently need to be put in place to guarantee its effectiveness. It is vital that the authorities do not assume that their responsibilities are restricted to establishing a protection mechanism and that there is a vital flow of communication between the federal, state and municipal governments.

**Name:** Vicente Moreno Domínguez (m), Irma Luna Montoya (f), Ivonne González Cristóbal (f), Juan Cristóbal Martínez (m), Alberto Cruz Luna (m) and Felipe Rodríguez Díaz (m)  
**Issue(s):** Fear for safety, Death threats, Impunity

**UA:** 252/13

**Issue Date:** 16 September 2013

**Country:** Mexico