

DEMAND THE RELEASE OF THE 12 POLITICAL PRISONERS OF ATENCO

CONTACT THE MEXICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UK:

Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza, Mexican Ambassador to UK, 16 St. George St, Mayfair, London W1S 1FD

Tel: +44 (0)20 7499 8586, Fax: +44 (0)20 7495 4035

Email: emedinamora@sre.gob.mx

CONTACT THE SUPREME COURT OF JUSTICE IN MEXICO:

Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación,

Pino Suárez Número 2, Colonia Delegación Cuauhtémoc, C.P. 06065, México, Distrito Federal.

Email: SCJN@mail.scjn.gob.mx

Tel: +52 (55) 5490-8000

CONTACT THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO:

Felipe Calderón, President of Mexico, Presidencia de La Republica, Residencia Oficial de Los Pinos, Puerta Central, Mexico, DF 11850,

Fax: +52 55 55 22 34 26

E-mail: felipe.calderon@presidencia.gob.mx

FURTHER INFORMATION

In English: UK Zapatista Solidarity Network <http://ukzapatistas.wordpress.com>

Edinburgh Chiapas Solidarity Group www.edinchiapas.org.uk

E-mail: edinchiapas@yahoo.co.uk

London Mexico Solidarity Group www.londonmexicosolidarity.org,

E-mail: londonmexicosolidarity@lists.aktivix.org

In Spanish: <http://www.atencolibertadyjusticia.com> | <http://atencofpdt.blogspot.com>

FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ATENCO

Demonstrations are taking place today, in cities throughout the world, because the Supreme Court of Justice of the Mexican nation (SCJN) is meeting to decide the future of 12 political prisoners from the small Mexican town of San Salvador Atenco who are currently serving sentences of up to 112 years.



On the 3rd and 4th of May of 2006, in one of the worst cases of police brutality in recent Mexican history, more than 3,500 agents of the Mexican security services attacked the population of San Salvador Atenco. The attack began when the people organised to stop the violent expulsion of flower vendors from a central square in nearby Texcoco, near Mexico City.

During this attack the police and military forces killed two youths, Alexis Benhumea and Francisco Javier Cortes. 207 people were arrested, many of whom were tortured, dozens of homes were invaded without warrants, and hundreds of people were tear-gassed and beaten. Amnesty International has

detailed and condemned the horrific systematic rape and sexual assault of 26 women by the police at this time; many of these attacks occurred while the women were being transported to prison.

It is widely believed that irregularities in the legal process denied the prisoners the right to a fair trial. For example, the principle of the presumption of innocence and the guarantees of due process were not respected, and the evidence on which the convictions were founded was illegally obtained.

The 12 prisoners are from the Peoples' Front for the Defence of the Land (FPDT), which in 2002 organised a successful local campaign against the construction of a new airport for Mexico City on the community's land, forcing the government into a humiliating abandonment of its plans. Many commentators believe the events of May 2006 were planned by the government to exact revenge, and to attempt to smash this organisation, which was at the time hosting and promoting the Zapatistas' 'Other Campaign'.

The demonstration has been called by the National and International Campaign for Freedom and Justice for Atenco, which campaigns for the release of these prisoners. After four years of unjust imprisonment, the cases of the remaining 12 out of originally over 200 political prisoners are being reviewed to decide whether or not they should continue to serve their sentences. Now is a crucial and decisive moment in the campaign for their release; it is time to put pressure on the Mexican government to release the prisoners and bring those responsible for the violence in Atenco to justice. This will be the last mobilisation before the court releases their decision.

Atenco is one of many cases of state repression in Mexico today. Today's demonstration is also in support of autonomous communities which are under threat, such as San Juan Copala, entirely surrounded by paramilitaries who will not allow food or aid to pass through their blockade, and the many Zapatista communities also under constant threat from paramilitary groups who steal their land and attack their people.

We demand freedom and justice for the Atenco 12 and for all political prisoners.



THE ROLE OF THE MEXICAN AMBASSADOR

Sr. Eduardo Medina-Mora Icaza, currently Mexican Ambassador to the UK, was the Federal Secretary of Public Security, the official responsible for public safety, at the time of the assault on Atenco, which he may have ordered and commanded. In 2009, the same Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation that is currently deciding the fate of the 12 prisoners, declared that neither Sr. Medina-Mora (who by now had been promoted to the position of Attorney General of the Republic) nor the Governor of the State of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, were in any way responsible for any of the human rights violations that took place in Atenco on 3rd and 4th May 2006. Only one of the eleven ministers who made the decision held Medina-Mora responsible for "failure to monitor the actions of the security services". In fact, as Attorney General he failed to prosecute anyone for the human rights abuses committed by those security services.