

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS DEFENDER KILLED

Julián Carrillo was shot death on 24 October, after receiving several death threats for his work defending the territory of his Indigenous community in Mexico. He is the latest death in a series of killings, including several members of his family and Indigenous authorities. The community fears that other attacks could take place.

Indigenous environmental, land and territory defender, **Julián Carrillo** was shot dead by an unknown person in the state of Chihuahua (northern Mexico) in the evening of 24 October. According to his family, they heard shooting in the mountains and, hours later, Julián Carrillo's body was found disfigured by shots from high-calibre firearms. Since 23 October, Julián Carrillo was in hiding in the Tarahumara mountain range because he was being followed by members of an alleged organized crime group in his community of Coloradas de la Virgen.

In August, Julián Carrillo told Amnesty International that, following the murder of his son-in-law in July, he started receiving death threats. Several members of his community warned him that the perpetrators of his son-in-law were looking for him to kill him. Fearing for his life, Julián Carrillo decided to leave Coloradas de la Virgen for several weeks. During his time away, a community member told Julián's daughter in law that people were looking for him to "chop his mouth and cut him off" because he was a "trouble-maker and they did not understand why and how Julián was denouncing the murderers happening in the community". The aggressors also knew that he was giving information to the authorities. Julián had returned to the community because his daughter died due to complications while giving birth. Julián Carrillo has had five members of his family murdered since 2016. In only one case, the alleged perpetrator was identified, and the municipal police has failed to detain him.

In 2014, Julián Carrillo and three other members of the community, as well as two members of organization Alianza Sierra Madre A.C (ASMAC) received protection measures from the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders provided by the Mexican government. In 2017, the Protection Mechanism was meant to reassess the risk they faced to grant appropriate measures. However, Amnesty International was informed the last risk assessment was made in 2016.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language to the Mexican authorities:

- Urging them to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of Julián Carrillo's killing, taking into account the possibility of the attack being in retaliation for his activities as an environmental, land and territory defender;
- Calling them to take all measures to guarantee the safety of Julián Carrillo's family members and the Coloradas de la Virgen community in accordance with their wishes and consent, including a prompt risk assessment of the community;
- Demanding them to take immediate steps to overcome the structural causes behind the threats, killings and attacks faced by human rights defenders in the Coloradas de la Virgen community.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 DECEMBER 2018 TO:

Governor of Chihuahua

Javier Corral Jurado
Av. Independencia 209
Zona Centro, 31000
Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico
Fax: +52 614 429 3300 EXT 11100
Email: despachodelejecutivo@chihuahua.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Governor of Chihuahua
/ Estimado Gobernador de Chihuahua

Chihuahua Attorney General Office

César Augusto Peniche Espejel
Avenida Paseo Bolívar 704
Zona Centro, 31000
Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico
Tel: +52 614 429 3330 EXT 11402
Email: despacho.fiscalia@chihuahua.gob.mx
Twitter: @Fiscalia_Chih
Salutation: Dear Attorney General /
Estimado Fiscal

And copies to:

Vice Minister of the Interior
Rafael Adirán Avante Juárez
Bucareli 99, Colonia Juárez
Delegación Cuauhtémoc, 06600, Mexico
Tel: +5128 00 00 EXT 16109, 16114,
16163
Email: ravante@segob.gob.mx
Twitter: @SEGOB_MX
Salutation: Dear Vice-Minister / Estimado
Señor Subsecretario

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR JULIÁN VENTURA, Head of Mission
Embassy of Mexico, 16 St. George Street, London, W1S 1FD Phone: 020 7499 8586 E-Mail: mexuk@sre.gob.mx twitter: @Embamexru

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Rarámuri Indigenous people of Coloradas de la Virgen defends its ancestral territory in the Tarahumara mountain chain in Chihuahua, north Mexico. They lost their land titles in the 1990s. Since then, outsiders have been using their territory, logging their forests and growing illegal crops. The murder of Julián Carrillo occurred a few weeks after members of the community denounced to different government authorities the existence of a mining concession to three individuals to exploit natural resources from the territory. According to the community, this concession would have been granted without prior free and informed consultation.

The Indigenous leaders of the community of Coloradas de la Virgen, as well as the non-governmental organization Alianza Sierra Madre A.C (ASMAC) which accompanies them, have faced threats, attacks, unfair trials and killings for speaking out against these problems. In February 2017, Isidro Baldenegro, winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2005 and former Amnesty International Prisoner of Conscience was killed. Between 2015 and 2018, at least eight other community leaders have been murdered.

In 2014, this situation encouraged the inclusion of Julián Carrillo and other leaders and staff members from ASMAC into the Protection Mechanism for human rights defenders. However, these measures are not adapted to their community context, its conditions of isolation or the collective nature of their struggle. Similarly, the protection provided by the state does not address the root causes of violence such as the agrarian conflict, the presence of organized crime or the historical discrimination faced by the Rarámuri Indigenous people.

Julián is like many others in the community who have been forced to move to other parts of the state because of the high rate of violence due to organized crime in the region. This month, Amnesty International interviewed some displaced members of Coloradas, who said that organized crime has taken control of their territory and killed indigenous authorities actively defending their rights.

According to the Mechanism for the Protection of Defenders and Journalists, between January and October of 2018, 16 human rights defenders in Mexico have been murdered.