



# Korean Metal Workers' Federation (KMWF)

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December 11, 2006

Mr. Leandro Arellano  
Ambassador  
Mexican Embassy in Korea

Dear Ambassador Arellano:

On behalf of the 150,000 members of the Korean Metal Workers Federation, I am writing to express our outrage at your government's repression of the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos y Similares de la República Mexicana (SNTMMSRM).

The Mexican government has chosen a course of repressive actions from Labor Ministry intervention in internal union affairs to the use of police forces, threats, illegal arrests and murder to deal with strikes. This cannot help but arouse serious concern in the international community.

We have heard through the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) that SNTMMSRM General Secretary Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, was forcefully removed from his position in March 2006 after speaking out against gross government and company negligence at the Pasta de Conchos mine, where a February 19 explosion took the lives of 65 miners, mostly irregular workers. Mexico's own National Human Rights Commission investigated the incident and has confirmed this negligence. Removal of union officers who are democratically elected by their membership violates union autonomy. The IMF has launched a complaint with the International Labour Organisation against the Mexican government citing violations of ILO Convention 87. We call on your government to redress the illegitimate removal of General Secretary Gómez Urrutia from office and stop government interference in internal union affairs.

We are also genuinely alarmed to find out that the Mexican government sent police armed with tear gas, clubs and guns to raid the SICARTSA steel mill at 6 am on April 20. The fact that the police shot and killed José Luis Castillo Zúñiga (worker at the SICARTSA steel plant) and Héctor Álvarez Gómez (union representative at the Mittal Steel company) and gave gunshot wounds to 40 other workers raises serious questions. Similarly, we are alarmed that your government jailed Indalecio Perez Morones, the local leader of the union at La Caridad mine in Sonora in response to their strike of

March 24 and that several hundred metal workers were dismissed for going on strike at the Sicartsa steel and Viga Trefilados steel wire plants. We call on your government to right these wrongs.

We believe that an equal and just society is worth fighting for. We call on you to use your considerable influence with the Mexican Labour Ministry and Mexican government to reinstate Napoleon to the position he was elected, to rectify the wrongs against the mine and metal workers above, and to stop government interference in internal union affairs, which should be decided by the union members and not the government in power. We look forward to hearing from you what actions you and your government have taken in response to these serious concerns.

Sincerely,



JEON, Jae Hwan  
President  
Korean Metal Workers' Federation (KMWF)

cc: SNTMMSRM  
International Metalworkers' Federation  
ILO Committee on Freedom of Association  
U.S. Congressional Hispanic Caucus