

Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas Center for Human Rights
San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, México

24 September 2012

Update to Urgent Action No. 02

**Forced displacement of 83 Zapatista support-bases in two communities.
Comandante Abel community besieged by an armed group of aggressors as the State Preventive
Police looks on.**

According to information documented by this Center for Human Rights in the communities of Nuevo Poblado Comandante Abel and Unión Hidalgo, autonomous rebel Zapatista municipality (MAREZ) La Dignidad, official municipality of Sabanilla, due to constant death-threats, aggressions, and harassment, 83 Zapatista support-bases were forcibly displaced on 8 September 2012; the 14 person who initially were disappeared presently find themselves displaced in the communities of San Marcos and Zaquitel Ojo de Agua, respectively. Both communities pertain to the MAREZ La Dignidad, official municipality of Sabanilla.

According to the documentation the **first forced displacement** took place in the community of **Nuevo Poblado Comandante Abel**, given that aggressions began on 6 September 2012 on the part of a group of persons, the majority of whom are members of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the Green Ecological Party of Mexico (PVEM) hailing from the community of Unión Hidalgo. These aggressions increased in intensity on 7 September, as this group intimidated the Zapatistas with gunfire, with the result that the following night **17 women, 21 youth, and 35 children (73 in total)** decided to flee the community and take refuge in the mountains, with precarious health and nutritional conditions. On 9 September they arrived at the San Marcos community, where they were received by fellow Zapatistas support-bases. Among the **73 persons** are found two women and two children who initially were reported as having been disappeared; they were found some days later in a location near the community.

Presently in Nuevo Poblado Comandante Abel there are found **22 men and five women (27 in total)** who are besieged by the armed aggressor group of Unión Hidalgo and units of the State Preventive Police (PEP) who on 18 September opened fire, in accordance with information we have documented.

According to sources, the **second forcible displacement** occurred in the community of **Unión Hidalgo**, due to the ongoing harassment and death-threats originating from PRI and PVEM members which the Zapatista support-bases have suffered now for more than a year and that have intensified in recent days. This is the reason for which **three women, three men, and four children (10 persons)** fled on 8 September 2012, now finding themselves in the community of Zaquitel Ojo de Agua.

Conditions of displacement

According to testimony, women and children suffer from vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and pain throughout their bodies due to the conditions of displacement.

The forced displacement resulting from armed conflict in Chiapas violates several human rights: the right to health and personal security, dignity, privacy, freedom of movement and residence, property, adequate living conditions, land, and territory. Regarding international pacts signed and ratified by the Mexican State we find the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Agreement on

Civil and Political Rights, the International Agreement on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, Principles on Internal Displacement, Convention no. 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples in independent states, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among other specific instruments, such as agreements on the rights of children and women.

Given the gravity of the situation, as well as the knowledge possessed by the State regarding the acts of the perpetrators in the zone that have been denounced by the Nueva Semilla Que Va a Producir Good-Government Council, this Center for Human Rights urgently demands the following:

- **The immediate cessation of all aggressions, death-threats, and harassment against the Zapatista support-bases of the communities Nuevo Poblado Comandante Abel and Unión Hidalgo on the part of the armed aggressor group that operates in the region.**
- **That the self-determination to which Zapatista communities have a right be respected.**

Due to the previously mentioned, we call on **persons, society, groups in solidarity, human-rights organizations, alternative media, collectives, and national and international organizations** urgently to demand that the Mexican State observe its obligation of respecting, protecting, and guaranteeing human rights, as stipulated in international agreements.

Express your concerns to:

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