

## **NEWSPAPER ADD FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE ATENCO PRISONERS**

On May 3 and 4, 2006, a police operation ordered by the federal government and the government of the State of Mexico, with more than 4,500 troops sent against members of the Peoples' Front in Defense of the Land (FPDT) supporting the defense of local flower vendor's right to work in Texcoco, provoked one of the most violent repressive episodes in the history of Mexico.

Ever since those days, when the record shows 207 people arrested, two young boys killed, around fifty women raped and sexually abused, torture, and house searches that have been widely denounced by a number of national and international Human Rights organizations, outrageous legal irregularities have been gradually accumulated to justify the unjust sentences imposed on Ignacio del Valle of 112 years in prison, Felipe Álvarez and Héctor Galindo of 67 ½ years in prison, and 10 other people (Oscar Hdz. Pacheco, Alejandro Pilón, Julio Espinosa, Pedro Reyes, Juan Carlos Estrada, Jorge Ordóñez, Adán Ordóñez, Narciso Arellano, Inés Rodolfo Cuellar, and Eduardo Morales) sentenced to 31 years, 11 months, and 15 days in prison. It is important to note that América del Valle, Bernardino Cruz Cardona, and Adán Espinosa Rojas are now pursued by the law.

In all these cases, the legal defense of those arrested and pursued have shown that the criminal justice proceedings are plagued with errors that have occurred at the time basic legal issues were resolved, such as: the violation of the principle of the presumption of innocence; violation of the principle of due process; lack of evidence of *corpus delicti* (body of the crime) and of probable responsibility, as well as of the degree of instigation by Ignacio del Valle Medina; violation of the rules of the weighing of evidence; violation of the guarantees of legality and legal security; and illegal sentences requiring payment for moral damage. All of these rights were ignored by the judges, proving that we are faced with a political situation involving the repression of a people that has honorably defended its land, natural resources, and traditions against the unjustified plans to build the new international airport proposed by Vicente Fox on its territory in 2001. It is also of great concern that the repression against the FPDT is happening in the framework of generalized repression against organizations and movements exercising their right to criticism, demonstrations, and resistance against government policies.

For all of the above reasons, figures in the artistic, academic, intellectual, trade union, human rights, activist, political and legislative sphere, among others, have decided to participate in the "Campaign for Freedom and Justice for Atenco" to demand a review of the sentences, respect for human rights, an end to the criminalization of the social movements and **FREEDOM FOR ALL THE SAN SALVADOR ATENCO PRISONERS**.

It has come to our attention that within a short time the investigation carried out by the Supreme Court of Justice will center on determining whether or not there were violations of individual guarantees of the persons arrested on May 3 and 4, 2006, in the municipalities of San Salvador Atenco and Texcoco in the State of Mexico. In view of this, we ask ourselves and we ask the Magistrates:

- a) Why did these human rights violations occur?
- b) Who ordered them?
- c) Was it due to a state strategy or to a situation that got out of hand and a lack of police training?

For the above reasons, we consider it necessary for all people to join forces who have supported the cause of freedom for the Atenco prisoners as well as those who wish to do so now.

We invite all of you to support the different activities of the campaign and to formulate your proposals, and also to form local committees in your centers of study, workplaces, and communities to stop the prolongation of the unjust imprisonment to which our comrades are being subjected.

**Justice and freedom for Atenco!  
Free all political prisoners!**

**Respectfully yours,**

Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez (ProDh)

Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social (CENCOS)

Comité Cerezo México ; Proyecto Viento de Libertad

Frente de Pueblos en Defensa de la Tierra (FPDT)

Jóvenes en Resistencia Alternativa

Servicios Legales y Estudios Jurídicos: (Lawyers and law office charged with the legal defense of Ignacio Del Valle and Felipe Alvarez, held in La Palma, and responsible for the appeals in defense of those pursued.)

Servicios y Asesoría para la Paz (SERAPAZ)