

Frank-Walter Steinmeier
President of the
Council of Ministers of the European Union

13 April 2007
Ref: B650

Dear Dr Steinmeier,

Subject : EU – Mexico Joint Council

In December 2006 President Felipe Calderón took office in Mexico, and a new government was inaugurated along with the newly elected federal Congress. Despite positive rhetoric, the new administration has focused, almost exclusively, on issues such as public security and economic management, and has yet to make specific and concrete commitments to fulfil its obligations to protect and ensure human rights. Ahead of the annual EU – Mexico Joint Council meeting on 19 April 2007, Amnesty International encloses a briefing note detailing a number of human rights concerns in Mexico. We would like to draw your attention to three particular priorities:

- Amnesty International's recent report '*Mexico: Laws without justice: Human rights violations and impunity in the public security and criminal justice system*' set out the pressing need for reform of the criminal justice and public security system, to ensure a credible human rights framework. The new government has made various proposals to strengthen public security measures and the legal framework of the criminal justice system, but so far these do not address many of the core structural problems that deny effective protection of rights to victims and criminal suspects and give rise to abuses at state and federal level.
- There is an urgent need for the Mexican government to commit to implementation of the new federal legislation recently passed by Congress establishing the responsibility of federal, state and municipal authorities to prevent and punish violence against women.
- Recently documented human rights violations in the policing of public order disturbances in Oaxaca and San Salvador Atenco, have yet to be properly investigated. These events must be investigated as a matter of urgency in order that those responsible are held to account.

Amnesty International would strongly encourage you to use the opportunity of the forthcoming meeting to raise these concerns with your Mexican counterparts. We would welcome any feedback on these discussions, and stand ready to provide further information if required.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Dick Oosting
Director,
Amnesty International EU Office



Barbara Lochbihler
Secretary General,
Amnesty International Germany

Cc: Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner

Annexes : EU Amnesty International briefing to German Presidency: human rights concerns in Mexico, April 2007;

Amnesty International Report, 7 February 2007, *'Mexico: Laws without justice: Human rights violations and impunity in the public security and criminal justice system'*.