

## **Elections in Mexico: Organizations in Québec and Canada express their deep concern about the violent repression of the Mexican state against its civilian population**

Sunday the June 7 is election day in Mexico . Elections are being held to elect governors in 9 states, mayors, local deputies in 17 states and federal deputies throughout the country. The run up to this election has been marred by extensive violence; 20 political assassinations in 10 states, 6 civilian murders (4 in Ixcaputzalco, Guerrero and 2 in Peto, Yucatan) and 6 civilian injuries as a result of an armed confrontation with government forces in Peto and Yucatán. Furthermore, 70 kidnappings and extortion cases and death threats to people have also been reported by groups linked to electoral interest.

Most importantly, delegations of the National Electoral Institute (INE) have been reportedly attacked by dissident groups in at least six states (Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacan, Oaxaca, Puebla and Veracruz), while electoral documentation has been destroyed or burned, in Guerrero and Oaxaca.

Mexico presently, is amidst a grave human rights crisis which has been brought to the attention of the international community and human rights watch dogs by the relentless efforts of the nation's vibrant civil society. There has been a demand of justice in the case of the 43 students who went missing last September, and also in the case of the recent targeted killings and extrajudicial murders allegedly carried out by the Mexican army, federal and local police in Tlatlaya , Apatzingan and Tanhuato. All of these cases and the callous attitude of the government has prompted protesting organisations backed by the Mexican civil society to boycott the elections. The principle demand being the safe return of the 43 missing students belonging to the Normal Rural School of Ayotzinapa. These innocent students were kidnapped by the local police in collusion with the federal police and the national army. We should not forget that this landmark case adds itself to the long and cruel list of more than 24,000 cases of disappearances and kidnappings at the hand of the state since 2006; with an average 13 disappearances per day, 100, 000 murders and 250 000 forced displacements, the government led by Peña Nieto ,is nothing short of an oppressive, cruel and corrupt military state running under the garb of pseudo democracy.

A statement issued on June 1, 2015 by the People's Council Tixtla, denounced the curtailing of human rights and harassment suffered by its organization by the ministerial police who as a ploy, repeatedly infiltrated the organization in plainclothes to monitor and intimidate people linked to the organization . Moreover, the Committee of students from the Normal School of Ayotzinapa say that on June 2, 2015 the federal police illegally stormed their premises without provocation and arrested 3 students , who had to be released 24 hours later under immense pressure from the public. Continuing the string of cruelty on Wednesday, the 3rd of June, more than 1000 armed federal police personnel were stationed near the Normal School and also reportedly attacked a

civilian bus carrying students and relatives of the 43 missing students, bound for Chilpancingo in Tixtla, Guerrero; this unprovoked attack left several people grievously injured .

The civil organizations on 2nd June also reported the arrival of military tanks and fully armed contingents in the states of Guerrero and Michoacan. So far the current Mexican government has behaved like a military state using the path of intimidation, oppression and torture to resolve public issues and to suppress any conflict or voice of dissent. People have been baselessly arrested, persecuted and inhumanly tortured as revealed by Juan Mendez, in his report published in December 2014 which paints a grim picture of innocent civilians and peaceful protesters being inhumanly treated and put through misery in Mexico at the hands of the state machinery.

In the background of the atrocities, repression and the policy of criminalisation of social protest by the Mexican government, the undersigned organizations through this letter express our grave concern about the anti-democratic measures, oppression, torture and killings that may be carried out by the Mexican government in the context of maintaining order during the elections scheduled on Sunday June 7, 2015. We also demand an immediate end to the abuse of public power and strict compliance with the constitution. Most importantly, we call upon the international community to pay heed and attention to this humanitarian crisis in the making, be wary of these developments and vociferously condemn any act of oppression by any group linked to the Mexican government.

Montreal, Quebec on the 4th day of June 2015.

#### **Sources:**

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#### **Signataires**

Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine

Comité de solidarité québécoise avec Ayotzinapa

Québec Solidaire