



Declaration of Solidarity with the Cerocahui Jesuits

The Jesuits in Mexico and throughout the Americas stand in solidarity with the Jesuit Community of Cerocahui, Chihuahua, Mexico in its pursuit of justice. On June 20, 2022, two members of this community, Fr. Javier Campos Morales, SJ and Fr. Joaquín César Mora Salazar, SJ, were murdered in their parish church, along with Pedro Palma, a tour guide.

On that day, an armed group brought Mr. Palma into the church of San Francisco to be executed next to the altar, where Fathers Javier and Joaquín defended him. All three were killed.

Eight months have passed since these deaths and the perpetrator has still not been apprehended. The authorities know the identity of the perpetrator, who is also responsible for the murder of an American teacher in 2018 and of a human rights activist in 2019. There has been an active warrant for his arrest since 2018.

Disturbingly, a few months after the murders, a video was posted online in which the perpetrator threatens the local Jesuits and witnesses.

We call on the Mexican authorities to arrest the perpetrator without further delay and ensure accountability for these crimes. The prevailing culture of impunity amplifies the cycle of violence in the Sierra Tarahumara, in Chihuahua and throughout Mexico. This violence can only end if impunity is addressed and justice is served.

Recently, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) requested that the Mexican state adopt measures to guarantee the safety of the nuns and priests who continue to serve these communities. We hope that these measures will improve the security of these territories.

We ask the three levels of government to create a coordination table to help bring peace to the municipality of Urique, Chihuahua. This requires strengthening local institutions, guaranteeing transparency and accountability, as well as a public security strategy of zero impunity and the protection of human rights.

Fathers Javier and Joaquín dedicated their lives to serving Indigenous communities and defending human rights in an area beset by organized crime and violence. Their legacy of love in service extended to their final moments: sacrificing their own lives in the pursuit of protecting another.

Although their life's work was tragically cut short, their deaths have served to shine a light on the suffering of thousands of families and communities affected by violence and impunity in Mexico.

Rev. Luis Gerardo Moro Madrid, SJ

Provincial, Jesuits of Mexico

Rev. Roberto Jaramillo, SJ

President, Conference of Provincials of Latin America

Rev. Brian Paulson, SJ

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