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New case of abuse by soldiers arrives at the Inter-American Court

- After seven years the door is opened so that Inés may find justice for the rape she suffered at the hands of soldiers

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) remitted the case of indigenous Tlapaneca woman, Inés Fernández Ortega, to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on 7th May this year. Fernández Ortega was tortured and raped by members of the Mexican Army in 2002, but to date those responsible have not been sanctioned. The IACHR send the case to the High Court after the Mexican State failed to comply with the recommendations aimed at compensating the damages suffered by the victim.

This is the second case against the Mexican Army for human rights violations that has reached the Inter-American Court.

Within this context, on 18th May this year, the superior human rights court on the continent ordered the implementation of provisional measures (temporary protection measures) for the victim, her family and a further 100 human rights defenders, including members of Tlachinollan Human Rights Centre, the Indigenous Me'phaa People's Organisation and the families of Raúl Lucas Lucía and Manuel Ponce Rosas, the indigenous Mixtec leaders who were disappeared on 13th February and then executed.

The Court's ruling arises because even though the Inter-American Commission requested that the State implement protection measures in favour of some of the beneficiaries as long ago as 2005; the threats and violence against them persist. However, to date the Mexican State has not implemented any of the measures.

The events described above take place within a climate of attacks against human rights defenders in Guerrero, which have generated a situation of genuine fear among the population; this has been further aggravated by the constant military and police patrols and check-points in the region.

CEJIL and Tlachinollan hope that the Mexican State will face up to its international obligations, complying with the Inter-American Court's ruling and adopting all necessary measures so that the beneficiaries in question and human rights defenders in Guerrero state, can carry out their work in safety and without fearing that their lives or physical integrity could be affected as a result.

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