

To: Governor of Coahuila Rubén Ignacio Moreira Valdez

Cc: Interior Secretary of Coahuila Víctor Zamora Rodríguez
Attorney General of Coahuila Homero Ramos Gloria
General Coordinator of 'Fuerza Coahuila' Hugo Gutiérrez Rodríguez
State Security Commissioner José Luis Chapa Reséndiz
Her Excellency the Norwegian Ambassador to Mexico Rut Giverin
Her Excellency the Swedish Ambassador to Mexico Annika Thunborg
His Excellency the Danish Ambassador to Mexico Henrik Bramsen Hahn
Section for Latin America, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director Kjersti Rødsmoen

Statement of support for Bishop Raul Vera and Ms. Jaqueline Campbell

On July 6th this year a report documenting forced disappearances and other crimes and human rights violations in the State of Coahuila, Mexico, was submitted to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague, the Netherlands.

On behalf of the Rafto Foundation for Human Rights, I hereby wish to express my applaud and support for the contributions made by Bishop Raul Vera and Ms. Jaqueline Campbell of the *Diocesan Center for Human Rights Fray Juan de Larios* in Saltillo to the work of the coalition of around 100 civil society organizations collecting this documentation.

While it is among the most important duties of citizens and civil society organizations to make relevant legal authorities aware of possible crimes, for which they may offer preliminary investigations, it is the duty of said authorities to secure formal investigations, and, if suspicion of culpability is sufficiently justified, to secure criminal prosecution. It is also the responsibility of legal authorities to give priority to matters that may involve violations of fundamental human rights.

The work of human rights defenders like Bishop Vera and Ms. Campbell is of vital and decisive importance for any democratic state aiming to establish rule of law in accordance with the International Bill of Human Rights, which is signed by the state of Mexico. We expect that such human rights defenders, who in Mexico carry out their work with considerable risk of becoming victims of slander or violence, are offered the necessary protection and support by the state.

We will follow the progress of the case presented by the Mexican coalition for the International Criminal Court, and the situation of Bishop Vera and Ms. Campbell, closely. We will also keep our partners, and governments who take an interest in the protection of human rights in Mexico, updated on these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Jostein Hole Kobbeltvedt
Executive Director