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María Elena Hermelinda Lezama Espinosa
Governor-elect of the state of Quintana Roo
In her office,
Quintana Roo
MEXICO

23 September 2022

María Elena Hermelinda Lezama Espinosa,

Distinguished Governor Elect,

As you know, on 9 November 2020, members of the municipal police of Benito Juárez (Cancún), in the State of Quintana Roo severely repressed a feminist demonstration. Protesters were mainly young women, who have come together to demand justice for the femicide of a woman known as “Alexis.” According to information [documented](#) by Amnesty International, members of the police fired live ammunition at protesters. The organization also documented the arbitrary detention of protesters and the use of torture, including sexual torture, which constituted a violation of their human rights.

On 20 November 2020, the Quintana Roo Human Rights Commission determined that the rights of protesters had, indeed, been violated and comprehensive reparations should be [provided](#). Authorities facilitated access to some rehabilitation and satisfaction measures, including psychosocial treatment and the construction of a memory plate. Yet, these were insufficient to ensure adequate redress of the harm inflicted. Worryingly, victims and survivors were not consulted for the design and implementation of measures. As such, the measures failed to meet international standards.

Against this backdrop, Amnesty International undertook a global campaign to ensure justice, truth and reparations for those who suffered police repression in Cancun. Over 340,000 people from all around the globe signed a petition calling the Prosecutor of the State of Quintana Roo to guarantee justice for Wendy Galarza, one of the survivors. Meanwhile, at the local level, the Mexican NGO *Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos* took the legal representation of the case, while victims and survivors came together in a group known as “Comité de Víctimas del 9N” to demand their rights through inspiring peaceful actions.

All of this translated into positive progress in securing access to rights. However, there was a major setback. The current governor of Quintana Roo, Carlos Joaquín González, had committed to providing access to comprehensive reparations measures during working meetings throughout 2022. Yet, inexplicably, in July 2022, he took back on this



commitment. This left victims and survivors feeling unheard. Almost two years after the events, state authorities had failed to fulfill, respect and protect their rights.

As you prepare to take office on 25 September 2022, we urge you to prioritize this issue immediately—which, it must be added, occurred during your time as Governor of the Benito Juárez Municipality (Cancún).

Before you stand the unique opportunity to uphold human rights and to set an example of how to fully and meaningfully redress those who were wronged in the past. To restore trust on state institutions in Quintana Roo, which was, understandably, damaged in the aftermath of 9 November 2020. You have the chance to set a new standard on how Mexican authorities should act to protect and guarantee the rights of women who protest and how they should respond when these rights are not respected.

As members of civil society, we remain hopeful at the possibility of engaging in meaningful dialogue with your office and of working together to achieving this goal.

We would like to wish you a successful term as Governor of Quintana Roo.

Sincerely,

Amnesty International

Comité de Víctimas del 9N

Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos

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