

CENCOS

March 19, 2009, Mexico City, D.F.

To Development and Peace:

MINDFUL OF:

The investigations carried out by a Canadian journalist on five partners of Desarrollo y Paz / Development and Peace / Développement et Paix in Mexico, including the National Center for Social Communication, or CENCOS.

The allegations of said journalist are based on the assumption that these organizations are “working and arguing in favour of abortion.” The journalist bases that conclusion on the *Report of Civil Society Organizations on the Status of Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights in Mexico (1997–2006)* or, in the current case, the *Report of Civil Society Organizations for the Universal Periodic Review*, the latter being presented as an alternative to the periodic report issued by the Mexican State in February of this year in Geneva. This latter document, moreover, was signed by more than 40 national organizations as well as 7 international networks, all of them working on human rights issues from thematic and sectoral approaches.

It is our intention to clarify and at the same time situate the terms of this report [in their proper context]. The National Center for Social Communication, CENCOS, helped write the section of the Report on freedom of expression—pointing out the concentration of communication media as well as the murders and disappearances of journalists. CENSOS also signed said Report in order to present an accurate and disturbing picture of the overall human rights situation in Mexico and to take a critical position to defend said rights in general, without supporting any claim or demand in particular. In this way, CENCO also helped raise its own visibility; more information can be found at our communication portal <http://www.cencos.org/es/EPU>.

CENCOS is a civil organization whose work is related to freedom of expression as a tool and as a right. Our objective is to build justice and dignity for the strengthening of democracy. More information on our organization can be found at: <http://www.cencos.org/>.

We promote the diverse voices of organizations, movements and demands that have human rights as their cornerstone in order to enhance public debate, thereby improving the plurality of viewpoints. We participate in campaigns such as the release of political prisoners <http://www.atencolibertadyjusticia.com>, or against the trafficking of children <http://www.infanciacomun.org.mx/campana.html>, in order to increase the visibility of these issues as social problems on the one hand and to seek solutions to problems that are harming Mexican society on the other.

We also carry out analysis, research, training and we support processes of social participation. The specific work that we carry out is focused on protecting journalists and communication media, <http://www.libertad-expresion.org.mx/>; our work also focuses on electoral issues from the citizens' point of view: <http://cencos.org/es/Elecciones+2009>.

We participate in several international networks such as *International Freedom of Expression, IFEX*: we also have consultant status at the Organization of American States.

We hope that these elements will help clarify the situation in Canada. The members of Desarrollo y Paz, Development and Peace/ Développement et Paix who support social justice, and thereby support the strengthening of democracy and participation, have supported the work of CENCOS in recent years.

You have our solidarity and support.

Sincerely,

Brisa Maya Solis

Director of the National Center for Social Communication, CENCOS

CIEPAC

March 19, 2009, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas

To Development and Peace:

It is with surprise that we learned of the allegations made by a Canadian journalist concerning five partners of Development and Peace in Mexico, including this Centre. These allegations revolve around the fact that we were considered organizations that “are working and arguing in favour of abortion,” because we had signed the *Report of Civil Society Organizations on the Status of Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights in Mexico (1997–2006)*. Said report was presented as an alternative to the periodic report issued by the Mexican government on application of the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC).

It is our intention to make it absolutely clear that the *Centro de Investigaciones Económicas y Políticas de Acción Comunitaria* (CIEPAC – Centre for Economic and Political Research for Community Action) supported and signed this Report in order to present an accurate portrait of the general human rights situation in Mexico and to take a strong position in their defence. It was not signed to support any claim or demand in particular.

The Centre for Economic and Political Research for Community Action, headquartered in Chiapas, is a civil organization whose work is the analysis, research, training and support of social processes. We do not carry out any specific work to promote a particular issue, including abortion. We work on building a more democratic world, with justice and dignity for all peoples.

We hope that our word has clarified the situation that has been unleashed in Canada, affecting our brothers and sisters of Development and Peace who, in keeping with the social justice that they promote, have supported CIEPAC’s work in recent years.

I would like to assure our partners at Development and Peace of our solidarity and support.

Sincerely,

Norma Cacho

For the CIEPAC Team

RMALC

To Development and Peace:

The Mexican Action Network on Free Trade (RMALC) is a coalition of organizations from different social and civil sectors of diverse thought and religious beliefs. Organizations participating in RMALC include trade unions, farmers, indigenous peoples, small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs, environmentalists, women and academics.

RMALC's work focuses on research, analysis and evaluation of the impacts of free trade on different sectors of society and seeks to generate alternative proposals based on democracy, freedom and justice that will benefit the country and its people.

Within this framework, we defend human, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. These rights are systematically violated by the Mexican government in its implementation of economic policies that put the focus on the interests of big companies at the expense of national development.

It was in this sense that we supported and signed the *Report of Civil Society Organizations on the Status of Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights in Mexico (1997–2006)*, because it contains a comprehensive vision of what is happening in our country.

To claim—as a Canadian journalist has done—that RMALC is an organization that “promotes abortion” because it signed said document, is an intentionally fraudulent and deceitful assertion that only seeks to damage Development and Peace’s work for justice in the world.

Women and men of Development and Peace, you have our support and solidarity.

Fraternally,

Marco Antonio Velázquez Navarrete

Technical Secretary

RMALC

ProDH

To Development and Peace:

We signed the reports for the Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights led by the United Nations with the intention of supporting the general cause of human rights in Mexico; not in order to specifically support the legalization of abortion.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Penman

Coordinator, International Relations

Centro de Derechos Humanos ProDH

Red TDT (Network “All rights for all”)

To Development and Peace:

The Network « All rights for all » maintains a holistic perspective in its work for the defense of human rights, in the sense that it works for all human rights and does not have any specific demand in relation to the question of abortion.

Edgar Cortez

Secretario Ejecutivo

Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos

"Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos"