

May 2016

MEXICO: Help families searching for their children



This is a drawing of Abel García Hernández. He was a student at a school in the small Mexican town of Ayotzinapa (pronounced Ah YO zi napa). Abel wanted to become a teacher.

In September 2014, police stopped the bus on which he was travelling. Abel was last seen being taken away with other students on the bus and put in police cars. But when their families went to the police station, Abel and the other students were not there. Officials said they knew nothing about them.

It's been more than a year now and still Abel's family is no closer to finding him.

Sadly, they are not the only families in this terrible situation. More than 27,000 people are now listed as disappeared in Mexico.

People do not just disappear into thin air. Somebody took them away.

It is the duty of Mexican investigators to search for the disappeared and bring them back to their families.

They are failing in this duty. In fact, investigators do little, if anything to find the missing.

Even worse, families told Amnesty International about threats they got. Officials told them that bad things would happen to them unless they stopped trying to find out who took their children away.



Families of the missing students take to the streets to call for action to find out where they are and bring them home.

Families want to keep asking questions about what happened to their children. But they are afraid they could be hurt themselves. They do not trust the Mexican government to protect them or tell the truth.

The situation is very worrying.

But there is hope. The mothers, fathers and siblings of the disappeared refuse to give up. They are joining together with other families to help each other and speak out.

They need our help too.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Monarch butterflies (called monarcas, in Spanish) are a powerful symbol because they join Canada and Mexico during their annual migration between our two countries. Let's deliver colourful messages of support in the form of a butterfly to the families who need our help. Amnesty International will share photos of the messages with officials in Mexico and in Canada to clearly show our support for the families of the disappeared.



1. Draw an outline of a butterfly – or download a pattern from the bottom of the page at www.amnesty.ca/butterflies. Cut out the butterfly shape.
2. Write a short, personal message of concern on your butterfly. Here is an example: “I support the families of the disappeared in Mexico. It’s time for action to find the missing. It’s time to find the people responsible for this terrible crime and bring them to justice. It’s time for the government to protect people so they no longer live in fear.”
3. Make sure to add your first name and where you live: for example, “Liam, 11 years old, Toronto, CANADA”.
4. Decorate your butterfly.

WHERE DO I SEND MY MESSAGE?

Mexico campaigner Kathy Price
Amnesty International
3-1992 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario M4S 1Z7

or email it to kprice@amnesty.ca.



WHAT ELSE CAN I DO? Please sign our e-action at www.amnesty.ca/mexicostudents. Invite your friends and family to do so too.



Amnesty members in Toronto take to the streets to support the families of the missing students.