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October 10, 2014

Enrique Peña Nieto
President
Republic of Mexico
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Dear President Peña Nieto:

In the name of the 3 million members of the National Education Association in the United States, I write to you about the very serious news from Ayotzinapa in the state of Guerrero. We are most concerned about the well-being of the 43 missing teacher trainees (normalistas) from the Escuela Normal de Ayotzinapa and the identities of the murdered citizens who were discovered in the mass graves.

We urge you to ensure that justice in Guerrero is at the top of your priorities as this investigation proceeds. We appreciate that the 22 police officers from Ayotzinapa are being held while the full investigation into their actions continues, with further investigation to identify additional people who may be responsible for these crimes.

All people – whether in Mexico or in our own country - deserve the full exercise of their human rights including freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression. As teachers, we understand the importance of a dignified salary and the importance of fair pay in both rural and urban communities. Quality public education is an essential investment that impacts the future of nations. Well-trained and equipped teachers, who work in safe environments, are best able to teach students.

As a member of Education International representing education unions in 172 nations, we call on you to ensure that schools and teacher training colleges across Mexico are sanctuaries for safety and human rights. We await progress and justice in this case.

Sincerely,

Lily Eskelsen García
President

Copies:

Angel Aguirre Rivero, Gobernador del Estado de Guerrero
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E. Anthony Wayne, Ambassador, United States Embassy, Mexico City

Fred van Leeuwen, Secretary General, Education International