

Special Alert! Please send a protest email or letter (See below)

On the night of October 10, President Calderón ordered federal police to seize the power plants operated by the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME), while simultaneously liquidating the state-owned Light and Power Company, and firing the entire workforce of approximately 43,000 employees. Some 22,000 retirees and 1,500 union technical school trainees were also affected. Five days earlier, the government refused to accord legal recognition to the democratically elected president of the Mexican Electrical Workers' Union, Martín Esparza, although this should have been a routine matter. At this moment, 5,000 federal police, backed up by at least 10,000 police reserves, and 3,000 military officers still hold over 100 facilities.

The National Lawyers Guild passed a resolution at our convention in Seattle which appears below.

Labourstart has issued an alert prepared by the Mexico Solidarity Network. **We encourage you to take a minute to send a message by going to the following link:**
<http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/node/904>

If you have the time to draft your own letter, especially if you can put it on your own letterhead, feel free to use material from the letter sent by the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) which appears at <http://www.ueinternational.org/> along with email addresses for the President of Mexico and other officials with copies to several labor organizations.

For background on this struggle in English, go to <http://www.ueinternational.org/> or <http://www.fpif.org/fpifxt/6519>

Please circulate this alert as widely as possible.

RESOLUTION BY THE NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD CONDEMNING THE TAKE-OVER BY THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT OF THE FACILITIES OF THE COMPANIA DE LUZ Y FUERZA DEL CENTRO AND THE ATTACKS ON THE MEXICAN ELECTRICAL WORKERS (SME), ITS MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

WHEREAS, the Mexican Electrical Workers (SME) has represented workers in Mexico for decades and has a proud history as a democratic union, active in defense of the rights of its members;

WHEREAS, last week the Mexican labor authorities refused to recognize Martín Esparza, the legally elected president of the Mexican Electrical Workers (SME), refusing what under Mexican law should be a routine matter to “take note (toma de nota)” of his election;

WHEREAS, this illegal intervention into the internal affairs of the union violates not only Mexican law, but also the commitments assumed by Mexico before the international community,

specifically convention 87 of the International Labor Organization. Moreover, this action by the government had the consequence of seriously limiting the legal capacity of the union to defend its members, including by freezing the unions assets;

WHEREAS, on October 10TH the government of Mexico, using the federal police, seized physical control of the work places of the Compañía de Luz y Fuerza del Centro, firing approximately 50,000 members. Subsequently, some workers were forced to return to their workplaces, some kidnapped or dragged by the police, due to the absence of workers with sufficient knowledge to operate the equipment;

WHEREAS, this takeover occurred in the absence of any legal authority or even prior written notice, and the discharge of workers from their workplaces by force and with no previous notice violates their human rights in that Mexican labor law requires a legal procedure prior to any closure of a place of work and that in the case of a change of employer that the labor rights of the workers must be respected;

WHEREAS, the National Lawyers Guild is gravely concerned both about the illegality of the actions taken by the Mexican government and that the discharge of these workers and termination of their wages have left some 50,000 families without any means of subsistence, and may force them to relinquish their legal rights to challenge the government's actions because of economic necessity.

THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED that the National Lawyers Guild strongly condemns the takeover by the Mexican government of the facilities of the Compañía de Luz y Fuerza del Centro and its attacks on the Mexican Electrical Workers (SME), its members and their families and calls upon the government to revoke its decree unilaterally liquidating the company, end the occupation by the police, and begin negotiations in good faith with the SME on any relevant issues.

IMPLEMENTATION: the International Committee of the National Lawyers Guild will send this resolution to President Felipe Calderon and other relevant Mexican political and labor authorities, circulate this resolution as widely as possible, encourage Guild members and our sister legal organizations to contact the Mexican government and labor authorities to express their condemnation, and work with our union and legal colleagues in Mexico to explore the possibility of legal or other appropriate actions.

This emergency resolution is sponsored by the International Committee and the Labor and Employment Committee.