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April 18, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

I write to urge your immediate attention to the case of Nestora Salgado, a U.S. citizen who was arrested in Guerrero, Mexico and has been detained in since August 21, 2013.

Ms. Salgado is a resident in Renton, Washington and a 42-year-old grandmother. She was arrested for her role in coordinating a community police force in her hometown of Olinalá, Guerrero, state that has a long tradition of legally recognized community policing groups. Prosecutors initially charged Ms. Salgado with kidnapping, a charge usually handled in the local court system. However, prison officials immediately transported her by air to a maximum security prison in the state of Nayarit, which is 1,000 kilometers away from her home town. Although federal jailing is allowed in cases where authorities find that the suspect is particularly dangerous, Ms. Salgado's family has not been informed the reason for this determination by Mexican authorities.

There are many other extremely troubling aspects of Ms. Salgado's arrest that require additional attention from the Embassy. Although Mexican authorities have to notify the U.S. Embassy when an American citizen is arrested, they did not immediately disclose Nestora's whereabouts to the U.S. Embassy when it inquired on behalf of her family. In fact it took several days for the family to learn her location. After learning of her whereabouts, Ms. Salgado's family hired a lawyer for her case. According to her family, Ms. Salgado was initially unable to speak with her lawyers for weeks and has yet to meet them in person. To date, she continues to go months without direct contact with her lawyers because obstacles continue to be imposed by the Mexican authorities.

Ms. Salgado's detention conditions are also a great cause of concern in this case. According to her family, she has been confined to her cell 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with only a few recent exceptions. Contrary to established policy, she was not allowed to make international phone calls to her family or her sister until very recently. Ms. Salgado has also been denied exercise and medication needed to control the painful neuropathy in her hands and feet; she needs both exercise and medication to stop her extremities from

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April 18, 2014
Page Two

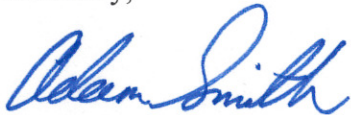
turning blue. These terrible conditions have been documented by her U.S.-based international human rights attorneys, who have provided the necessary medical evidence to the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

On April 3, 2014, a Mexican federal judge dismissed significant criminal charges against Ms. Salgado and stated that she was acting legally as an authorized leader of her indigenous community. However, the state kidnapping charges are still pending against her and she remains in the same federal prison living in the same deplorable conditions.

I understand that the Embassy has visited Ms. Salgado and that it has been helpful in monitoring the case. I am extremely concerned about the harsh treatment of Ms. Salgado by Mexican authorities and the brutal prison conditions she is experiencing. I am also concerned about the Mexican authorities' refusal to allow her the appropriate medical treatment and exercise she needs for her neuropathy. It is critical that the U.S. Embassy use the means available to ensure her health, safety, and welfare during her detention.

Additionally, I urge you to ensure that Ms. Salgado is afforded due process by the Mexican judicial system. Continued attention from the Embassy can help ensure that Ms. Salgado's case is not unnecessarily stalled as it moves through the judicial system, that she has access to her attorneys, and receives a fair trial. I request that the State Department take all reasonable measures possible to achieve this outcome.

Sincerely,



ADAM SMITH
Member of Congress