

To Whoever Is Still Willing to Listen

June 19, 2019



President André Manuel López Obador has deployed several thousand troops of the newly created National Guard to the state of Chiapas to deter Central American immigrants from entering Mexico from Guatemala and in that way to please U.S. President Donald J. Trump. There is fear that not only will the National Guard repress the Central Americans but that it will also be used against the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, its communities, and other indigenous peoples. The following statement, which we have translated here, has been issued by Mexican and international individuals and organizations. - Dan La Botz

This is a message of concern for life and for dignity. Those of us who are signing this letter are worried about what is happening once again in the forgotten corner of southeast Mexico that became transformed into hope and rebellion, Chiapas.

This is neither an ideological manifesto nor a declaration taking a position regarding the political changes that are taking place in Mexico. It is a message of genuine concern for what is felt to be developing down there after 25 years, after 500 years of resisting extermination and oblivion. We are worried about those who for a quarter of a century have fought for their autonomy, who have put their dignity above political pragmatism, and who have been an example of freedom in a world in world shackled by fear. We are worried about the Zapatistas.

We are concerned to learn about the growing military activity in the territories of the Zapatista communities. We see that in the midst of the complex security situation that Mexico is experiencing, the movement toward the militarization of the country is gaining speed. It is a warning sign that under the very questionable strategy regarding the National Guard, just as has occurred so many times before, there is a "security" force that doesn't distinguish between crime and resistance, between cruelty and legitimate rebellion. It is contradictory that when the statistics of the Government of Mexico itself indicate that the Zapatiasta zone has among the lowest crime rates, the security strategy is directed in a threatening way to these zones that are some of the few sanctuaries of liberty and safety for the Mexico of the underdogs.

This appears to be a strategy of war rather than a strategy of security.

We who sign this letter are a diverse group of people, some of whom perceive the administration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador with hope and others with skepticism, still we are all people who dream of a different and better world. Those of us who support this statement believe that change in Mexico cannot take place under the shadow of political pragmatism, giving into pressures that lead toward authoritarianism, exploitation, and violence on behalf of the 1%, nor can it change with the disqualification of critical voices that with their authenticity and consistency have won the respect of the world.

We see a growing process of hostility toward authentic, historic and legitimate projects of resistance that oppose the Maya Train, the Transisthmian Corridor, and the Integral Morelos Plan, among others. We are concerned to learn about the recent homicides of members of the National Indigenous Governing Congress. We are concerned with the possibility that this government, with its liberal and conservative predecessors, will once again marginalize the indigenous people on the verge of extermination.

The world is watching with its eyes and its heart what is happening in Mexico and in Chiapas.

Stop the war against the Zapatistas and the indigenous peoples of Mexico!

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