

I am writing to express my grave concern on relatives of disappeared people whom public officials in the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua have intimidated and are pressuring to allow government-chosen forensic experts to examine human remains found in the area. If carried out, these tests will make subsequent independent testing impossible.

I am calling on the authorities to safeguard all human remains which were found near Cuauhtémoc City between 2011 and 2014, and refrain from processing the evidence until a mutually agreed, independent group of experts is appointed.

I am urging the authorities to stop local officials from intimidating or pressuring relatives of disappeared or abducted people in Cuauhtémoc City.

I am also calling for a full, prompt and thorough investigation into the hundreds of cases of enforced disappearances and abductions in the area in the last few years.

Lastly I need to remind the authorities of their obligation to respect the rights of all victims and the legitimate work of their human rights defenders.

Sincerely yours,