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Mexico: Concern for the health of imprisoned woman human rights defender Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván

On 8 April 2021, the lawyers of woman human rights defender **Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván** reported that her health has significantly deteriorated, as a result of the unsanitary conditions she is subjected to in the maximum security prison Centro Federal de Readaptación Social Femenil (CEFERSO) No. 16, in the municipality of Coatlán, in Morelos state, where she has been detained since October 2020.

[Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván](#) is a land and indigenous peoples' rights defender and coordinator of the Zapata Vive Libertarian Collective, which promotes different forms of peaceful resistance to neo-liberal development models imposed by the Mexican state. At the time of writing, there are seven cases open against the woman human rights defender based on fabricated allegations against her, in reprisal for her human rights work.

On 1 April 2021, Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván informed the Judge of Control in Acapulco, Guerrero that she was suffering from a fever, a headache, stomach aches, chills and general body pain. The judge reportedly requested information from the detention centre as to the woman human rights defender's condition. Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván reported that she believes the ailments she is suffering from are caused by the poor sanitary conditions of the detention centre where she is being held, where she has had to drink non potable water and eat food of poor quality and low nutritional value since October 2020.

Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván's legal defence team reported that after several requests, the medical attention she has received for these ailments has so far been insufficient. The woman human rights defender was seen by a doctor in the detention centre, who ruled out the possibility that she had contracted COVID-19 and concluded that Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván was suffering from a stomach virus, reportedly contracted from bacteria in the food in the detention centre. The woman human rights defender has not received medication to combat the virus, only painkillers. Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván reports that the food and water she continues to be provided in the detention centre do not meet minimum health requirements.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned for Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván's health and well-being as a result of the poor sanitary conditions in the maximum security detention centre where she is being held, particularly concerning given that the woman human rights defender has been detained on fabricated charges in attempts to criminalise her legitimate and peaceful activities in defence of the rights of peasant communities. Front Line Defenders reiterates its concern regarding the practice of levying baseless allegations against human rights defenders, which has become an effective strategy to intimidate those working for the promotion and protection of human rights in Mexico.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Mexico to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván and drop all charges against her, and drop all charges against her, as Front Line Defenders believe they are motivated solely by her legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
2. Immediately provide Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván with the necessary and adequate medication and medical treatment she requires;
3. Guarantee that the treatment of Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván in detention adheres to the conditions established in the 'Set of principles for the protection of all persons under any form of detention or imprisonment', adopted by resolution 43/173 of the UN General Assembly of December 9, 1988;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Mexico are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions [including judicial harassment].