

Vicente Fox Not Welcome in Vancouver

Vancouver-Based Human Rights Organizations Denounce and Oppose former Mexican President's presence and talk on leadership at Power Within event

Rally at 2:00 PM; Thursday, March 8th, 2007; GM Place, Vancouver

March 7, 2007 (Vancouver) – Major international and Mexican human rights organizations, including *Amnesty International* and *Human Rights Watch*, have documented an extensive list of human rights abuses committed under the presidency of Vicente Fox. These include organized rape and sexual assault campaigns by state forces against the women of San Salvador Atenco and Oaxaca, and systemic negligence, corruption and torture in dealing with a situation in which more than 400 women and girls have been brutally murdered in the cities of Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua.

Now on March 8, **International Women's Day**, Vicente Fox and his wife, Marta Sahagun, have been invited to speak in Vancouver at a Power Within motivational event at GM place.

The Other Campaign Vancouver, a group of Mexican and Canadian social justice activists, together with over 30 organizations (including unions such as HEU, women's organizations, church groups, social justicia organizations, and academics) sent a letter to the company organizing the event, Power Within, asking them to drop Vicente Fox from their program. The letter clearly outlines some of the documentary evidence of the shameful human rights record of the Fox administration.

"Contrary to the statements on the event web site, we believe the legacy of the Fox presidency is nothing to be proud of. It is one of serious human rights abuses, particularly against women, of missed opportunities for true democratic reform, of continued political corruption, of increased poverty and inequality, and of severe political repression and state sponsored violence against social movements and minority groups. The evidence is well documented by such organizations as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and has been broadly covered by the Mexican national media, as well as numerous international sources" states the letter from the Other Campaign.

As one of many examples of abuse under Fox the Other Campaign cites the case of San Salvador Atenco: "On May 4, 2006 about 4,000 federal, local and state police under orders from the Public Security Secretary, who in turn answers directly to the president, carried out an operation against the town of San Salvador Atenco near Mexico City. Grievous human rights abuses ensued, and two youths were confirmed killed. These facts are not controversial as they have been well documented by major international and national human rights organizations and media. Particularly heinous were the incidents of systematic rape, and sexual and physical assault against women detained during the operation."

Since the company has refused to drop Fox and Sahagun from their program, the Other Campaign Vancouver together with women's and immigrant rights groups, social justice organizations and other community allies will be holding a rally and protest during the event, handing out information to attendees and educating the public at large on the true legacy of one of the worst presidencies in Mexican history. The rally will be held at: 2 PM on Thursday, March 8th, at GM Place, Vancouver.

The letter sent to the event organizers outlining the case against Fox, as well as more information on the Other Campaign Vancouver, can be found on this web site: <http://otravancouver.resist.ca>.

The Other Campaign Vancouver / La Otra Campaña Vancouver

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