United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 25, 2014

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

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write to express our profound concern for the lives of the 43 young students that disappeared on September 26th in the State of Guerrero, Mexico. After more than a month of continuous investigations by Mexican authorities, it is disconcerting that the fate of these students remains uncertain, even as mounting evidence implies that they have become the latest victims of the country's drug-related violence.

In the midst of this crisis, we urge you to do everything possible to support the Mexican government by making additional investigative and forensic resources available to assist in locating the missing students. Even if our worst fears are confirmed, we ask that you assist the Mexican government in its efforts to bring all those responsible to justice and to ensure positive post-mortem identifications that allow families to begin their grieving and healing process.

As thousands of frustrated Mexicans gather throughout the country to protest against impunity, we are concerned that the situation in Guerrero is symptomatic of a larger issue that has been endemic to Mexico in recent years. We are deeply troubled by the reports of multiple clandestine mass graves that have been found throughout the search process. According to the Mexican Attorney General's Office, there are more than 22,000 people who disappeared or went missing over the past decade, and who remain unaccounted for. This number constitutes one of the largest in the hemisphere and one that can't be ignored.

At a time when President Peña Nieto has taken great strides to reform Mexico's economic and energy sectors, it is imperative that attention also be focused on strengthening the investigative and forensic capacity of Mexican law enforcement and its ability to serve victims of crime, violence, and human rights abuses. It is critical that the United States stand in partnership with these efforts to ensure justice for the 43 young students and for the tens of thousands of Mexicans that have gone missing.

In closing, our hearts go out to the families of the missing students and we once again reiterate our request for support to our Mexican partners during this time of crisis.

Sincerely,

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

Tom Udall
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Christopher Murphy
United States Senator

Marco Rubio
United States Senator

Mark Kirk
United States Senator

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Cory Booker
United States Senator