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INTERNATIONALER METALLGEWERKSCHAFTSBUND
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INTERNATIONELLA METALLFEDERATIONEN
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Dear Sirs,

On behalf of the International Metalworkers' Federation representing interest of 25 million workers in 200 countries we are writing to express our deep dismay upon the article "*Industriales arremeten contra CAT: es un peligro para el estado, dicen*" (http://periodicodigital.com.mx/portal/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=136902%3AIndustriales-arremeten-contra-cat-es-un-peligro-para-el-estado-dicen&Itemid=534) published in the electronic bulletin **Periodico Digital** on 27 July 2011. Such fear provoking statements put the lives of several human and labor rights activists at immediate risk, and contributes to a climate in which Mexican workers are increasingly terrified to stand up for their basic rights. If the irresponsible statements attributed to Luis Espinosa in the article accurately reflect the views of his organization, they represent a threat to the safety and physical integrity of CAT employees in Puebla, and demonstrate CANACINTRA's short-sighted and flawed vision of how economic development works.

CAT employees are currently operating under precautionary measures provided by your government as a result of the death threats, burglary, and physical attacks to which they've been subject since April 2010. This is not the first time that CAT has come under attack as a direct result of its work to educate workers about their basic rights in Puebla. Legally incorporated in 2001, CAT has contributed time and again to significant gains in assembly workers' rights and socioeconomic conditions in Puebla, and as a result has faced publicly vaunted hostility and violence on the part of the local authorities, security forces, employers, hired goons and "protection unions".

As recognised by the ILO in its resolution on CASE 2694 and highlighted by numerous academic studies from inside Mexico, these so-called unions are the lynchpin of a system that works to suppress workers' wages and keep them from exercising their legitimate rights whilst employers create a cheap and unsustainable comparative advantage based on contributing the very minimum to the local economy. It is these corrupt organisations that see the CAT as a threat -- which is ironic given that the real threat to livelihoods