

March 10, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Education and Mobilization in Contested Mexico – Situating Ayotzinapa

CENTRE FOR  
RESEARCH ON  
LATIN AMERICAN  
AND THE  
CARIBBEAN

EIGHTH FLOOR  
KANEFF TOWER  
4700 KEELE ST  
TORONTO ON  
CANADA M3J 1P3  
T 416.736.5237  
cerlac@yorku.ca  
www.yorku.ca/cerlac

York University's Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) announces its annual **Michael Baptista Lecture**. This year, the event will provide the public with expert analyses of the current situation in Mexico. The panelists are: Luis Hernández (La Jornada), María Luz Arriaga (National Autonomous University of Mexico), Jo Tuckman (The Guardian), and Hepzibah Muñoz (University of New Brunswick). This event will take place on **Wednesday, March 18, 5-9 pm** at **Nancy's Auditorium** in the **YWCA ELM Centre (87 Elm Street)** in downtown Toronto.

On September 26, 2014, police and gunmen attacked students from the Ayotzinapa Teachers' College in the town of Iguala. Three were killed, dozens injured and 43 student teachers were taken away, never to be seen again. This atrocity is part of a landscape of violence and impunity carried out through alliances among elements of the Mexican state and organized crime. In response, a national movement of resistance has emerged.

In view of the forced disappearance of 43 student-teachers from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Teachers' College in Ayotzinapa (Mexico), this public event in Toronto will begin with a commemoration of the missing student teachers and others who have been killed or disappeared in Mexico. The panel of experts on contemporary Mexico will then explore the context surrounding these events including the rise of drug violence, longstanding popular movements among teachers and students, meaningful democracy, and the links between powerful interests in licit and illicit industries.

Amnesty International and Common Frontiers are cosponsoring the event. Accomplished Toronto-based musician Quique Escamilla, originally from Chiapas (Mexico), will commemorate those who are suffering and resisting violence in Mexico through his music.

The Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) is a York University-based hub for inter- and multidisciplinary research on Latin America and the Caribbean, their diasporas, and their relations with Canada and the rest of the world.

For more information or to arrange an interview with one of the panelists, please contact William Payne at [wpayne@yorku.ca](mailto:wpayne@yorku.ca) or at 416-536-9511.



### **Biographical information for panelists:**

**Luis Hernández Navarro** is the Opinion editor and a weekly columnist with *La Jornada*, a leading progressive national newspaper in Mexico. Noam Chomsky has described *La Jornada* as: “maybe the only real independent newspaper in the hemisphere.” His recent books include: *Brothers in Arms - Community Police and Self-Defence Forces* (2014), *There will be no Recess: Educational Counter-Reform and Teachers’ Resistance* (2013), and *Sowing Concrete, Harvesting Rage* (2012). He was born in Mexico City in 1955.

**Jo Tuckman** is a freelance journalist who has been based in Mexico for the past 15 years, publishing primarily in *The Guardian*. She has covered every major political story in the country during that time, as well as the expansion of organized criminal violence and its context of corruption and impunity. She is also the author of *Mexico: Democracy Interrupted*, published by Yale University Press in 2012. An updated Spanish translation of this book was published by Penguin Random House in 2013.

**María de la Luz Arriaga Lemus** has been a professor in the Faculty of Economics at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) for 38 years. She founded the *Tri-national Coalition in Defense of Public Education* (Mexico, the United States and Canada) in 1993, and the *Network for Public Education in the Americas* in 1999. She has contributed to the debate on education policy in Mexico and Latin America, participating in national and international conferences, interviews in newspapers, radio and television, and in numerous publications. She received training as a primary school teacher before doing her Doctorate in Latin American Studies at the UNAM. She is committed to supporting teacher and student movements in defence of education as a social right.

**Hepzibah Muñoz Martinez** is Assistant Professor in the History and Politics department at the University of New Brunswick (Saint John campus), where she teaches Latin American politics and political economy. She has done accompaniment work with the *United Forces for Our Disappeared* in Coahuila since 2012 and is a former visiting researcher at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Mexico. She was one of the lead organizers of the speaking tour *No More Blood: Struggles for Peace and Human Rights in Mexico*. This tour took place in March 2012 in five Canadian cities to raise awareness of the security crisis and human rights violations in Mexico, including enforced and involuntary disappearances. Her blog *nomorebloodinmexico.org* focuses on solidarity work between Mexico and Canada in the area of human rights.