

# *Parents of 43 Ayotzinapa Students Agree to Meet Drug Leader*

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Mexico City, April 03 (teleSUR-RHC) In a move widely criticized by supporters, some of the parents of the 43 forcibly disappeared students accepted a help offer on Tuesday from a Mexican drug cartel known as *Los Rojos*.

In February, the leader of the cartel, Santiago Mazari Hernandez, had banners hung throughout the southern Mexican state of *Morelos* that claimed *Los Rojos* had nothing to do with the disappearance of the students and implied the cartel head had information about the case.

"I am willing to talk to each one of the students' parents who have been affected, to remove the blindfold from their eyes, so they can know the truth, that the government is truly to blame for all the injustices in the states of Guerrero and Morelos," read the banner.

Hernandez suggested that his adversary, Federico Figueroa of the *Guerros Unidos* cartel, was to blame. According to the official version of events, the students were captured by local police and handed over to *Guerreros Unidos* group who then killed the students and burned the bodies.

The attorney general's office, which has closed the case, said the students were killed by *Guerreros Unidos* because they believed the students were affiliated with Los Rojos. The families dispute that version of events.

In response to Hernandez's message, a group of parents left their own banner addressed to the cartel leader. "We ask you to please help us find the whereabouts of our sons, because this bad government has not been serious with us, on the contrary, they have hurt us with their lies. We are poor people, and they have stepped upon our dignity," stated the banner from the parents.

The message from the parents said they were willing to meet with Hernandez if necessary and left a phone number where they could be reached. "If we have to give our lives for them, so be it. We're already dead inside, so we are going to look for our children ... We know we run a risk, but we have to do whatever we can," Epifanio Alvarez, a father of one the missing students told Vice news.

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