

Will Family Press Statements

October 28, 2006

Statement from the Family of Brad Will

"We are grieving over the tragic and senseless loss of Brad's life. Brad's friends and family admired his brave support for the downtrodden and willingness to act tirelessly upon his convictions. We believe he died doing what he loved. We will all miss Brad's compassionate, loving and adventurous spirit, and it is our hope that his life's work reporting on the human struggle will never be forgotten."

November 8th, 2006

The family of Brad Will has issued the following statement:

"We understand that two of the group of five allegedly involved in Brad's murder have been arrested in Oaxaca. We applaud this action but also note that the other three implicated directly in the crime remain at large. We urge that efforts immediately be expanded to find and arrest all of those involved in all recent killings there.

We call for the creation of an independent federal Mexican commission to ensure a fair and just investigation and trial.

And we urge an inquiry into the extent to which higher-level officials in the state government of Oaxaca have been involved in both Brad's murder and other human rights violations.

We also condemn and seek an immediate end to the illegitimate arrests and ongoing harassment of the press corps in Oaxaca.

And we wholeheartedly agree with Reporters Without Borders' call for Oaxaca state governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz to be summoned before the new prosecutor's office dealing with attacks on press freedom.

Finally, we urge that the demonstrators maintain a distinctly peaceful and non-violent approach to the expression of their demands in Oaxaca."

Brad Will's Family Seeks "a Vigorous Prosecution of the Guilty Parties"
Human Rights Attorney Miguel Angel de Los Santos Takes the Case to Mexican Court

January 18, 2007
PRESS RELEASE
Brad Will (1970-2006)

The Will family is pleased to have the renowned Mexican human rights lawyer, Miguel Angel de Los Santos Cruz, join the cause for justice in the case of Bradley Roland Will's death.

Brad, a New York based photojournalist and activist, was shot and killed in Oaxaca, Mexico last October 27 while videotaping the turmoil in the Mexican State. Although two government-affiliated suspects were initially held for the murder, they were released by Oaxacan state authorities in late November on claims of insufficient evidence. A number of human rights groups have questioned the legitimacy of the state investigation and are calling for the case to be moved to the federal level.

De los Santos is a lawyer who has dedicated his career to ensuring that all people are treated justly by his country's legal system. He has long helped the indigenous people of the Mexican state of Chiapas, ensuring fair legal representation for Mexico's poor. De los Santos has represented victims of abuse by government authorities and has been an attorney for political prisoners in Mexico. He has also reported human rights abuses in southern Mexico to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

De los Santos will act as coadyuvante, the official legal representative for the family, to which victims' families are entitled under Mexican law. He will have full access to the complete investigative file and he will work toward a thorough and legitimate investigation into Brad's tragic death.

"There is a serious problem of impunity in Mexico, and we do not want Brad's murder to increase the long list of unresolved cases. It has been almost three months since Brad's death – we urge the Mexican authorities to carry out a prompt, effective and impartial investigation to find those responsible and make them accountable," said de los Santos. "The Mexican government has already failed in its obligation to ensure Brad's right to life, so now we hope it won't fail to investigate and to punish those responsible for his murder."

Brad's mother, Kathy Will, added: "There are serious allegations of human rights abuses in Oaxaca. It is time for the Mexican government to step forward and address these issues and pursue a vigorous prosecution of the guilty parties. Our son was only one of many journalists attacked this past year in Mexico. We want justice. The practice of impunity must end."