

The government continues to persecute me, says Napoleón Gómez Urrutia

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The mining official says his passport renewal was refused due to “possible restriction order”

An archive image of the mining leader Photo Maria Luisa Severiano

The national leader of the mining union, Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, accuses the government of: “without any reason, legal or otherwise, maintaining the political persecution against me and the mining union” despite the fact that all the cases of this type presented against him (11 in total) “collapsed not only because of their falsity (as the judges made clear), but also because of the explicit resolution (August 28, 2014) of the fourth collegiate court in criminal matters of the Supreme Court of Justice Nation,” whereby his exoneration “was unanimous, definitive and fundamental.”

In an interview with *La Jornada*, Gómez Urrutia emphasizes that “this is the real situation: political persecution, and I cannot describe it in any other way. Officials and the businessmen who pay them, such as Germán Larrea, Alberto Bailleres and Alonso Ancira, all participate in this. It seems that their strategy is to keep me out of the country at all costs, but I am not prepared to have my rights as a Mexican citizen taken away from me.”

The union leader describes certain experiences that support his claim. Most recently, last Monday, November 7: “I went to the Mexican Consulate in Vancouver to renew my passport and my wife's. With hers there was no problem, but when they entered my application into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs system a note appears in my file that warns, in green: POSSIBLE RESTRICTION ORDER, and as such they denied my renewal.”

The mining leader goes on: “possible restriction order, based on what? Two years ago I was fully and wholly exonerated of all the false accusations made against me. Is this about putting pressure on and blackmailing me? Well, they will not be able to, and these are concrete facts that make me very angry. In 2006 I renewed my passport at the same consulate without any problems, and now I am threatened with a 'possible restriction order', for no reason or legal motive, which reflects the level of perversion and deformation in the Mexican judicial system. And a government that does not respect the rule of law is headed for failure.”

But the case of the passport only confirms what Gómez Urrutia has said, and reiterates: “the bank accounts of the union, its officials and personnel are still frozen by the Attorney General's Office (PGR), even though they should have been released the day after the aforementioned resolution of the fourth collegiate court in criminal matters of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation.”

Furthermore, “my house in Mexico City was seized; it could not be rented or sold. We eventually managed to free it, although the PGR resisted; A judge had to order the release. The PGR's officials asked for 30 days to update the file; the deadline passed and they requested 10 more days. These were granted, and they no longer had any alternative, because the same judge was already acting against them ... But only a few hours later they seized it again.”

The union leader continues: “we asked on what grounds they proceeded as such, and the PGR replied that it was due to an 'anonymous statement'. For weeks they refused to make this available for our lawyers to analyse, but the judge finally gave the order. The alleged 'anonymous statement' says that 'one night a person called, apparently with a woman's voice – so the documentation says – and did not want to give their name or details', and stated that in that house (property of Gómez Urrutia) I and two other people (who do not exist, they are false names, we already investigated this) used it for illicit activities. The house has been empty, seized by the PGR. So, how can they accuse you and seize your property because of an anonymous tip-off? Of course, the PGR themselves invented it.”

Facilitating “settlement”

But Mexican “justice” always “facilitates” settlement. As Gómez Urrutia says: “with the bank accounts frozen and the house seized again, PGR personnel approached us with a 'solution': for the union and personal accounts, and also the house, to be released, they demanded 40 percent of the value of these assets. Obviously, we rejected this; they lowered their demand to 25 percent, and finally were willing to settle for 15 percent. In exchange they would cancel the 'anonymous statement' and release the assets.”