



March 20, 2026

UNITED STEELWORKERS CONDEMN VIOLENT ATTACK ON TORNEL RUBBER WORKERS IN MEXICO

The United Steelworkers express our deepest concern and indignation regarding the armed attack perpetrated in the early hours of Wednesday, March 18, against the workers of the Tornel Rubber Company in the municipality of Tultitlán, State of Mexico. This attack occurred while the workers were legitimately exercising their constitutional right to strike, as enshrined in Article 123 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States.

The violent aggression against the strikers constitutes a criminal act and a flagrant violation of human and labor rights—specifically the rights to strike, freedom of association, and collective bargaining—and represents a disturbing assault on democracy in Mexico.

In this regard, we call for the immediate intervention of the Government of Mexico—specifically the Presidency, the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS), and the Secretariat of Economy (SE)—to guarantee the safety of the Tornel workers and to conduct a transparent investigation that identifies and sanctions those responsible for orchestrating this attack.

It is imperative that the Government and the National Chamber of the Rubber Industry (CNIH) publicly repudiate any form of violent action and speak out in favor of upholding the rule of law by ensuring compliance with the benefits stipulated in the industry's current Contract-Law (an industry-wide collective bargaining agreement).

This is all the more critical considering that, in recent days, the CNIH sent a letter to the Secretary of Economy arguing against the advisability of applying the Contract-Law; in doing so, they cited the strike by Tornel workers as well as the dispute regarding the application of the Contract-Law at Pirelli—both of which are subjects of complaints under the Rapid Response Labor Mechanism established by the Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, the United States, and Canada (USMCA/CUSMA). Furthermore, in recent months, the Labor Secretariat has been promoting an alternative draft of the Contract-Law that would reduce benefits and We also call upon the governments of the United States and Canada to demand stronger decrease the number of workers covered by this sectoral collective agreement.

guarantees under the USMCA/CUSMA. Without respect for human rights and the right to genuine collective bargaining for Mexican workers—and as long as demands for better benefits

continue to be met with gunfire—there can be no fair free trade agreement, nor will it be possible to guarantee fair competition for workers in the North America.

Workers at Tornel went on strike on February 23 of this year at 3:00 PM, citing violations of the Rubber Industry Contract-Law. These violations included the company's failure to adhere to the 40-hour workweek, the payment of a 44-day year-end bonus, a vacation premium of 25 to 31 days, employer-paid social security contributions, and the recognition of February 5 and March 21 as official public holidays.

The absence of a strong statement from the government and the business sector condemning the acts of terrorism committed against Tornel workers—and supporting the enforcement of workers' collective bargaining rights—would send a troubling signal regarding a regression in the protection of labor rights initiated through the 2019 labor reform. Such silence would signify a dangerous return to the most violent and illegal practices of gangsterism and *charrismo* (control by corrupt union bosses).

We demand justice, the comprehensive and immediate implementation of the Rubber Industry Contract-Law, and urgent protective measures for the workers at Tornel.