

PUBLIC

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08 July 2005

Further Information on UA 37/05 (AMR 41/004/2005, 16 February 2005) Fear for safety/death threats

MEXICO Lydia Cacho Ribeiro (f), President of the *Centro Integral de Atención a las Mujeres (CIAM)*, Women's Assistance Centre, and human rights defender
Other staff members of CIAM

Lydia Cacho Ribeiro, president of the organization *Centro Integral de Atención a las Mujeres (CIAM)*, Women's Assistance Centre, has recently received further threats as a result of her work to protect the rights of women and girls. Amnesty International is concerned for her safety as well as for the safety of other staff members of CIAM.

During the period from 25 April to 1 July, Lydia Cacho Ribeiro has reportedly received at least 42 threatening telephone calls at CIAM's office in the city of Cancun, Quintana Roo state. All the calls have allegedly been made by a former police officer from the *Policía Judicial del Estado*, State Judicial Police Force, in Coahuila state, whose wife and children are being sheltered by CIAM. The same man was reportedly responsible for a series of threats against Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and CIAM staff earlier this year and in November 2004.

In a number of the more recent telephone calls, the man allegedly said: "This is for Lydia Cacho for her to be aware that I'll be in Cancún soon, when she is least expecting me... The *Procuraduría General de la República* (PGR), Attorney General's Office, cannot do anything to me... whoever messes with me dies". (*"Esto es para Lydia Cacho que sepa que pronto estaré en Cancún, cuando menos se lo espere.... La PGR no puede hacerme nada... quienes se meten conmigo sufren hasta la muerte"*).

On 10 March, federal agents (*Agentes Federales de Investigación*) told Lydia Cacho Ribeiro that the former police officer had fled Mexico, and that she and the CIAM staff therefore had no need to fear for their safety. However, eyewitnesses claim that they saw the man in the northern states of Nuevo Leon and Coahuila in March. The recent series of threatening telephone calls were allegedly made from cities in these states. On 30 June the man visited the women's shelter in the city of Saltillo, Coahuila state, where he reportedly harassed the manager of the shelter, demanding that she tell Lydia Cacho Ribeiro to stop speaking out about his case and that his wife and children be returned to him.

The former police officer is under investigation by the federal authorities (*Agentes Federales de Investigación*) due to his alleged links with organized crime, but judges have reportedly refused to issue a warrant for his arrest. Neither have state investigative authorities filed any charges against him in relation to the threats against Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and CIAM staff members.

Following pressure from Amnesty International and other national and international organizations, Lydia Cacho Ribeiro is currently receiving protection from three federal agents. The CIAM staff in Cancun had received very little protection from the state authorities, but even this was withdrawn following the election of a new state administration in April.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and the staff of CIAM following renewed threats against them;
- calling for measures guaranteeing the safety of Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and the staff of CIAM to be strengthened, in accordance with their wishes;

- calling for the authorities to act decisively to prevent the former police officer from intimidating Lydia Cacho and the staff of CIAM and to ensure he is prosecuted for criminal offences he has committed;
- calling for an investigation into how the former police officer has been allowed to remain at liberty to make further threats given clear evidence of criminal offences;
- reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women calls on States to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women;
- reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Quintana Roo State

Lic. Félix González Canto

Gobernador del Estado de Quintana Roo

Palacio de Gobierno, Av. 22 de Enero y Héroes, Chetumal 77009, Estado de Quintana Roo, MÉXICO

Fax: + 52 983 832 4257 (if someone answers, say “tono de fax por favor”)

Salutation: Dear Governor/ Señor Gobernador

Attorney General of Quintana Roo State

Lic. Bello Melchor Rodríguez Carrillo

Procurador General de Justicia en el Estado de Quintana Roo

Avenida José López Portillo s/n, Región 93, Manzana 21, Lote 1, entre Avenida Kaba y Calle 16

Estado de Quintana Roo, MÉXICO

Fax: + 52 983 832 3174

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Señor Procurador

Attorney General of Coahuilla State

Lic. Oscar Calderon Rocha, Procurador General de Justicia en el Estado de Coahuilla

Humberto Castilla Salas No. 600, Fraccionamiento Centro Metropolitano,

Saltillo, Coahuilla, C. P 25050, Estado de Coahuilla, México.

Fax: + 52844.438 0700

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Señor Procurador

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Daniel Cabeza de Vaca, Procurador General de la Republica

Procuraduría General de la República, Paseo de la Reforma nº 211-213, Piso 16

Col. Cuauhtémoc, Delegación Cuauhtémoc, México D.F., C.P. 06500, MEXICO

Fax: + 52 55 53 46 09 83 / 08 (if someone answers, say “tono de fax por favor”)

Salutation: Señor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

CIAM - Human rights organization

Centro Integral de Atención a las Mujeres - CIAM Cancún A.C.

Calle 12 poniente · 66, SMZA 63 Cancún Quintana Roo 77500, MEXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 August 2005.