

PUBLIC

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Fear for Safety/Threats

12 February 2003

GUATEMALA

Iduvina Hernández (f), Director of the *Asociación para el Estudio y la Promoción de la Seguridad en Democracia* (SEDEM), Association for the Study and Promotion of Security in a Democracy

Iduvina Hernández, director of the *Asociación para el Estudio y la Promoción de la Seguridad en Democracia* (SEDEM), Association for the Study and Promotion of Security in a Democracy has recently received a series of anonymous threatening phone calls. Amnesty International is concerned for her safety and that of her colleagues at SEDEM.

On 2 February, Iduvina Hernández received some ten phone calls in which the caller hung up when she answered. On 8 February she received another call from the same number, in which the caller threatened her physical safety in a vulgar manner.

The threats may be an effort to intimidate Iduvina Hernandez and her organization, SEDEM, for the work it carries out on national security, intelligence and democracy in Guatemala. They may also be connected with her potential role in the *Comisión de Investigación de los Aparatos Clandestinos de Seguridad* (CICIACS), The Commission to Investigate Clandestine Security Apparatus. This is an initiative that has recently been requested by Guatemalan non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Human Rights Ombudsman. If approved, the commission will investigate illegal bodies and clandestine security groups in Guatemala.

As director of SEDEM, Iduvina Hernández has also analyzed increasing threats against human rights defenders and the remilitarization of Guatemalan society, including the government's readiness to negotiate with ex-civil patrollers, many of whom were responsible for assassinations and "disappearances" during Guatemala's long term civil conflict.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the Christmas break, in December 2002, the offices of SEDEM were broken into. SEDEM fears that the break-in was an effort to obtain confidential information concerning Iduvina Hernández' work, as her computer was illegally accessed. Despite the fact that SEDEM reported the break-in, the Public Prosecutor's Office has not yet made any progress with the case.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Iduvina Hernández and urging the authorities to take immediate measures to guarantee her safety;
- calling on the authorities including the Public Prosecutors office to carry out an immediate, exhaustive and impartial investigation into the threats against Iduvina Hernández and SEDEM;
- asking that the results of the investigations be made public.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General

Lic. Carlos David de Leon Argueta

Fiscal General de la Republica

Fiscalia General del Ministerio Publico

8a. Avenida 10-57, Tercer nivel

Zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Telegram: Fiscal General de la Republica, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 221 2718

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Senor Fiscal General

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Adolfo Reyes Calderón

Ministro de Gobernación

6ª Avenida 4-64, Zona 4

Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Fax: +502 362 0239 / 362 0237

Salutation: Dear Minister/Señor Ministro

Director General of the National Civil Police

Comisario General Raul Arquimedes Manchame Leiva

Director General de la Policia Nacional Civil

6a Avenida 13-71, Zona 1

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Telegram: Director General de la Policia, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 251 9382

Salutation: Dear Director/Senor Director

COPIES TO:

Human Rights Organization

SEDEM

Boulevard Liberación 15-86 Zona 13, Edificio Obelisco,

2 Nivel Oficina 208, Guatemala 01013.

Telefax: + 502 3615303 / 3619945 / 3619402 (if a voice answers, say "fax por favor")

Human Rights Procurator

Lic. Sergio Morales

Procuraduria de los Derechos Humanos

12 Avenida 12-72, Zona 1

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Telefax: +502 230 0874 / 76

Fax: +502 238 1734

Newspaper

Diario Prensa Libre

13 Calle 9-31, Zona I

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: +502 251 8768/ 230 2193/ 230 2257

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 March 2003.