

URGENT ACTION

WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

Two women activists, both members of a human rights organization in Oaxaca State, southern Mexico, are being threatened and harassed.

Human rights defender **Alba Cruz Ramos** received a threatening text message on 30 April. It was similar to threats she had received before: it called her "mum" (*mami*) and it said that there was still unfinished business: the senders intended not to repeat the threat but to act on it. Alba Cruz Ramos, a lawyer coordinator at human rights organization **Human Rights Integral Defense Committee** (Comité de Defensa Integral de Derechos Humanos Gobixha AC, CODIGO-DH), has been receiving protection measures since 2007 from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos) to provide protection against threats for her human rights work.

Another human rights defender working with CODIGO-DH, **Susana Ramírez**, was arrested and released after 34 hours in custody. She was not ill-treated, but CODIGO-DH believe her arrest was in reprisal for her human rights work. She had been covering a protest in Oaxaca City for her work in the communications department of CODIGO-DH when protesters clashed with members of the municipal police. She told the police that she was not taking part in the protest but documenting it, however she was detained along with 28 other people. Susana Ramírez was held incommunicado for several hours; and was only allowed to talk to her lawyer and family after 14 hours.

Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Alba Cruz Ramos and all members of CODIGO-DH so that they are able to carry out their work without fear of reprisals or illegal detention;
- Urging them to order a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the threatening message received by Alba Cruz on 30 April and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reminding the authorities of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JUNE 2013 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong
Secretario de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, col. Juárez, Cuauhtemoc,
Distrito Federal, México, C.P. 6600
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414

Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Minister/

Sr. Secretario

Governor of Oaxaca State

Lic. Gabino Cué Monteagudo
Plaza de la Constitución, Centro
Histórico
Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, México C.P.
68000

Fax: +52 95 1501 8100, ext.40068 (ask

"tono de fax, por favour")

Email: spagoboaxaca@gmail.com

Salutation: Dear Governor/

Sr. Gobernador

And copies to:

Local human rights organization

Comité de Defensa Integral de Derechos
Humanos Gobixha AC

Email: contacto@codigodh.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mexican human rights defender Alba Cruz Ramos was forced to leave the country for Europe in early 2010, after her security situation deteriorated. However, while she was in Europe, thousands of kilometres away from her home in the city of Oaxaca, she received a death threat by text message on her phone referring to her activities while abroad. Back in Mexico, she suffered further harassment, intimidation and death threats throughout 2010, 2011 and 2012. Formal complaints about all the incidents have been filed by CODIGO-DH with the authorities, but no one has been brought to justice for them.

Alba Cruz was a member of the 25th of November Liberation Committee (Comité de Liberación 25 de Noviembre) an NGO based in Oaxaca City. She has represented victims of torture, other ill-treatment and politically motivated prosecution in connection with widespread protests and police abuses that took place in Oaxaca State in 2006. In 2007, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ordered Mexico to provide Alba Cruz with protection. In 2012 Alba Cruz and other members of CODIGO-DH represented community activists opposing the construction of large wind farms on Oaxaca's coast. Several local activists have been threatened and unlawfully detained.

A Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists was unanimously approved by both houses of Mexico's parliament, and signed by the President, in 2012. The process for implementing the law has now started, including the direct participation of representatives of civil society, but operational protocols, clear guidelines on cooperation between the federal and state authorities and resources urgently need to be put in place to guarantee its effectiveness. It is vital that the authorities do not assume that their responsibilities are restricted to establishing a protection mechanism and that there is a vital flow of communication between the federal, state and municipal governments.

Name: Alba Cruz Ramos, Susana Ramírez and all other members of CODIGO-DH
Gender m/f: m & f

UA: 119/13 Index: AMR 41/024/2013 Issue Date: 8 May 2013

