

UA 39/99

Fear for

**MEXICO Consuelo Morales Elizondo (f) , director of the human rights organisation
CADHAC
Liliana Cruz Castellanos (f)]
María Emilia Espejo Mansillas (f)] CADHAC permanent staff
Marlene Martínez Garza (f)]
Carolina Rico Hernández (f)]
Other members of CADHAC**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of members of the human rights organisation *Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos Asociación Civil* (CADHAC), Citizens for Human Rights, who have been under constant police surveillance since 24 February 1999.

On 23 February CADHAC issued a public statement (see below) on reports of torture at the *Centro de Readaptación Social de Apodaca*, (*CERESO de Apodaca*), Apodaca Social Reintegration Centre, a prison in Monterrey, Nuevo León. Since 24 February, several men, some in uniforms of the *Policía Judicial del Estado* (PJE), State Judicial Police, have been stationed outside CADHAC's offices in Monterrey in two vans, and have followed CADHAC members when they leave the offices. Anonymous messages have been left on the answering machines in CADHAC's offices and at its members' homes, and their faxes and e-mails have apparently been blocked.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CADHAC is a small organisation, most of whose staff and volunteers are women, which works particularly on prisoners' rights. Since 1996 they have documented and exposed the appalling prison conditions at the *CERESO de Apodaca*. In May 1998 the Vice-secretary of Security for Nuevo León publicly accused CADHAC director Sister Consuelo Morales Elizondo of making unfounded allegations about the ill-treatment of detainees in the *CERESO de Apodaca*, and threatened to sue her.

On 22 February more than 40 *CERESO Apodaca* inmates started a hunger strike to protest against torture and ill-treatment. Consuelo Morales and other members were turned back when they tried to visit the prison at the request of the hunger strikers' relatives. On 23 February CADHAC issued a public statement about the conditions at the prison as well the authorities' refusal to allow them access.

On 1 November 1998 AI sent a letter to the authorities of Nuevo León, AMR 41/98.14, requesting an investigation into the threats against CADHAC and into the human rights violations inside the *CERESO* of Apodaca. For further action and information please see Urgent Actions AMR 41/11/95 and AMR 41/64/97 as well as the documents AMR 41/36/98, AMR 41/06/96.

Amnesty International believes that by preventing human rights defenders from carrying out their legitimate work, the Mexican government is failing in its international commitments. The United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified by Mexico in 1986, states: "Each state party should ensure that any individual who alleges he has been subjected to torture in any territory under its jurisdiction has the right to complain to, and have his case promptly and impartially examined by, its competent authorities. Steps shall be taken to ensure that the complainant and witness are protected against all ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of his complaint or any evidence given".

The Vienna Declaration at the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights (WCHR), adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, including Mexico in June 1993, which states: "non-governmental organisations should be free to carry out their human rights activities, without interference, within the framework of national law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern at the intimidation and harassment of Consuelo Morales Elizondo and other CADHAC members;
- urging the federal and state authorities to put an end to this intimidation and harassment;
- calling for guarantees that human rights defenders in Mexico will be allowed to carry out their legitimate activities free from interference;
- reminding the authorities of their commitment under the two treaties mentioned above.

-If possible:

request a full and impartial investigation into the human rights violations, including torture in the CERESO de Apodaca, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon state

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior
 Lic. Francisco Labastida Ochoa
 Secretario de Gobernación, Secretaría de Gobernación
 Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez C.P.06699, México DF, MEXICO
Fax: + 52 5 546 5350

Salutation: Sr. Secretario/Dear Minister

Governor of Nuevo León
 Lic. Fernando Canales Clariond,
 Señor Gobernador de Nuevo León
 Palacio de Gobierno del Estado de Nuevo León, Monterrey, NL, MEXICO
Fax: + 52 8 343 9873

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador/Dear Governor

President of the Congress of Nuevo León
 Lic. Gerardo Garza Sada
 Señor Presidente del Congreso de Estado de Nuevo León
 Matamoroz y Zaragoza, zona centro,
 64000, Monterrey, NL, MEXICO

Salutation: Dear President of the Congress/Estimado Presidente del Congreso

COPIES TO:

President of the Human rights Committee of the Congress of Nuevo León
 Dip. Lucilda Perez Salazar
 Matamoroz y Zaragoza, zona centro
 64000, Monterrey, NL, MEXICO

Salutation: Estimada Presidenta de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Congreso/Dear President of the Human Rights Commission in Congress.

CADHAC

Padre Mier 617 PTE, 64000 Monterrey, Nuevo León, 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 12 April 1999.