

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 41/16/96

UA 95/96

Fear for safety

4 April 1996

MEXICOGina Batista (f), journalist

José Luis Robledo (m), grass roots activist

Sonia Lara (f), grass roots activist

On 26 March 1996, Gina Batista, a reporter and program director for *Canal 40*, a Mexican TV channel, survived unharmed after she was shot at by unidentified individuals driving a vehicle which intercepted her car in Mexico City. The attackers also hurled threats against her for her work as a journalist.

In an apparently unrelated incident on the same day, José Luis Robledo and Sonia Lara, grass roots activists working for *Coordinación de Solidaridad con las Luchas Alternativas*, Coordination of Solidarity with Alternative Struggle, a non-governmental organization in Mexico City, reportedly received up to 10 anonymous telephone calls threatening them with death for their activities on behalf of neighbours' rights in Mexico City.

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Gina Batista, José Luis Robledo and Sonia Lara. Journalists, human rights defenders and members of grassroots organizations who have been active in publicizing human rights violations, or promoting and protecting human rights in Mexico, have frequently encountered opposition against their work by people believed to be linked to the authorities, and there has been an alarming increase in threats and attacks suffered by this sector of the population in the last year (see also UA 47/96 AMR 41/12/96, 27 February 1996; UA 27/96, AMR 41/04/96, 2 February; UA 12/96, AMR 41/02/96 22 January; UA 09/96, AMR 41/01/96, 16 January; UA 203/95, AMR 41/19/95, 18 August 1995; UA 157/95, AMR 41/14/95, 4 July and UA 105/95, AMR 41/11/95, 3 May).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Gina Batista, apparently attacked and threatened because of her work as a journalist;
- expressing concern for the safety of José Luis Robledo and Sonia Lara, apparently threatened because of their grass-roots work on behalf of citizen's rights;
- calling for immediate measures to guarantee their safety;
- urging prompt and thorough investigations into the attack and threats and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to step up effective measures to ensure the safety of all journalist, human rights defenders and members of grass-roots organizations in Mexico.

APPEALS TO:

1) President of the Republic
Lic. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León
Presidente de la República
Palacio Nacional
06067, México D.F., MEXICO

Telegrams: Presidente Zedillo, México D.F., México

Telexes: 170937 sppnme; 1774468 sppnme

Faxes: + 52 5 271 1764

Salutation: Sr. President/Dear President

2) Minister of the Interior

Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor

Secretario de la Gobernación

Secretaría de la Gobernación

Bucareli 99, 1er piso

Col. Juárez

06699, México DF, MÉXICO

Telegrams: Secretario Gobernación, México D.F., México

Faxes: + 52 5 546 7388

Salutation: Sr. Secretario/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:1) Weekly magazine

Sr. Editor

La Jornada

Balderas 68

06050, México D.F., MÉXICO

2) Human Rights Organization

Sres.

Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles

de Derechos Humanos "Todos los Derechos para Todos"

Puebla 153, Col, Roma

06700, México D.F., MÉXICO

and to diplomatic representatives of México accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 May 1996.