

ACT NOW

1. WRITE TO THE NICARAGUAN ATTORNEY GENERAL:

- expressing concern that the apparently baseless complaint against the nine women human rights defenders remains open two years on, and calling on the Public Prosecutor's Office to resolve the case and clarify their legal position;

- urging the authorities to ensure that the nine women can carry on with their work free from intimidation.

Dr. Julio Centeno Gómez
Fiscal General de la República de Nicaragua
Ministerio Público
Km 4, Carretera Masaya
Contiguo al Bancentro
Managua
Nicaragua

Fax: +505 2255 6832

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Amnesty International
International Secretariat
Peter Benenson House
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 0DW
United Kingdom

www.amnesty.org
October 2009
Index: AMR 43/014/2009

NINE WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS NICARAGUA

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



2009
AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL
WRITE FOR
RIGHTS

PLEASE HELP NINE WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS, NICARAGUA

Nine women's rights defenders are facing legal proceedings for their involvement in the case of a nine-year-old girl who obtained a legal abortion in Nicaragua after she was raped and became pregnant. It is feared that they have been targeted for their human rights work, particularly in the area of reproductive health.

The nine women – Ana María Pizarro, Juanita Jiménez, Lorna Norori, Luisa Molina Arguello, Marta María Blandón, Martha Munguía, Mayra Sirias, Violeta Delgado and Yamileth Mejía – are well-known Nicaraguan women's rights defenders, working with a variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In October 2007, the Nicaraguan Association for Human Rights, an NGO backed by the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, brought a legal complaint against the women citing their work in the case of the nine-year-old child.



From left to right first row:
Marta María Blandón, Ana María Pizarro, Luisa Molina Arguello, Martha Munguía, Mayra Sirias
From left to right second row:
Violeta Delgado, Yamileth Mejía, Juanita Jiménez, Lorna Norori
First image: © Ipas; all other images: © Amnesty International

It is now two years since the complaint was filed, and there is still no news as to when it will be resolved. Amnesty International fears that the complaint has been brought solely because of the women's human rights work and campaigning activities to ensure that women and girls have access to safe and effective sexual and reproductive health services, including therapeutic abortion.

The organizations which the women belong to campaigned against the law reforms, introduced in 2008, that criminalize all forms of abortion in Nicaragua. The law allows for no exceptions in any circumstances. As a result, women and girls whose lives or health are put at risk by pregnancy, or whose pregnancy is a result of rape or incest, are now compelled to carry the pregnancy to term.

Women can now be imprisoned for seeking safe abortions in these circumstances and medical professionals face punishments for providing essential medical treatment to save the life of a pregnant patient or prevent permanent damage to her health.

It is vital that the work of women's rights defenders in Nicaragua is allowed to continue without harassment or intimidation.