

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

**GUATEMALA** **Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil (f), teacher and Departmental Secretary of the *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Educación de Guatemala* (STEG), Guatemalan Union of Educational Workers**  
**Other members of the family of Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil, including her seven children**

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On 20 March an attempt was apparently made on the life of Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil, a teacher and the Departmental Secretary of the *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Educación de Guatemala* (STEG), Guatemalan Union of Educational Workers, in Jutiapa department, near the border with El Salvador. Amnesty International is deeply concerned for the safety of Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil and her family, including her seven children.

At approximately 5pm on 20 March, after Claudia Rivas had left a meeting in the town of Jutiapa (the regional capital of Jutiapa department), a man approached her, brandishing a pistol with the apparent intention of shooting at her. Claudia Rivas was able to get into a colleague's car, and the colleague managed to drive away quickly.

Claudia Rivas has received numerous death threats believed to be related both to her work as Departmental Secretary of STEG and her efforts to seek justice for the killing of her brother, German Adolfo Rivas Rosil, the former departmental representative of STEG. German Adolfo Rivas Rosil "disappeared" on 23 August 2005. His body was discovered on 23 January 2006.

In her work for the STEG, Claudia Rivas has denounced alleged corruption within the Ministry of Education in Jutiapa department. She has filed a number of complaints with the central education authority in the capital, Guatemala City, concerning the allegations. Since she began filing these complaints, she has received numerous death threats. On 19 July 2005 Claudia Rivas was abducted by three men after leaving the offices of the Ministry of Education in the town of Jutiapa. She was held for four hours, and during her captivity she was warned that she would be killed if she did not stop her work for the STEG. Her captors also told her that she was being watched.

On 23 August 2005 her brother German Adolfo Rivas Rosil went missing, allegedly after he had agreed to meet a local police officer. German Rivas's mother filed a complaint about his "disappearance" with the local public prosecutor's office in Jalapa town in the neighbouring department of Jalapa the following day. On 24 September Claudia Rivas filed a complaint with the Office for Professional Responsibility (*Oficina de Responsabilidad Profesional*, ORP), the internal investigations body of the National Civilian Police, calling for an investigation into three police officers thought to be behind the "disappearance" of her brother. To Amnesty International's knowledge no such investigation has been carried out. Since the body of German Rivas was discovered 4km outside the town of Jalapa on 23 January 2006, the campaign led by his family to bring those responsible for his death to justice has intensified, and Claudia Rivas has been threatened and intimidated a number of times. On several occasions, police patrol cars and unmarked cars with no licence plates and tinted windows have been seen outside her house. Since her brother's body was discovered she has also received numerous anonymous telephone calls in which the caller threatened Claudia Rivas telling her that if she doesn't stop going to Jalapa and inquiring into the case of her brother she will suffer the same fate as him. The anonymous caller also told her that she is being watched and that the caller knows where she lives.

The local Ministry of Education has reportedly tried to obstruct Claudia Rivas's work with the STEG. In January 2006 she was re-elected to serve for two years as one of the two STEG delegates on the local education board (*jurado de oposición*), which had given her a platform from which she could denounce alleged corruption within the Ministry. As an elected member of the education board, Claudia Rivas should be exempt from her teaching duties. However, the Ministry of Education has forced her to teach in the remote village of Tunas in Jutiapa department. Amnesty International fears that Claudia Rivas is put at further risk by having to travel to and from her teaching post in Tunas.

Claudia Rivas has reported all the threats and intimidation she has experienced, as well as the recent apparent attempt on her life, to the Public Prosecutor's Office in Jutiapa. However, to her knowledge no steps have been taken to identify who is behind the threats. On 23 March the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ordered that the Guatemalan government provide protection measures for Claudia Rivas to ensure her safety. No protection measures have yet been implemented.

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

- calling on the Guatemalan authorities to carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the threats, intimidation and the recent apparent attempted shooting of Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil, making the results public and bringing those responsible to justice;
- urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Claudia and her family in accordance with her wishes, and in accordance with the ruling of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on 23 March;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that the Ministry of Education immediately recognise Claudia Rivas's elected position in the local education authority, and allow her to be relieved of her teaching duties during the two-year period of her office;
- calling for a thorough investigation into the killing of German Adolfo Rivas Rosil, for the results to be made public and the perpetrators brought to justice;
- reminding the authorities of the right of human rights defenders such as Claudia Jeannette Rivas Rosil to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

**APPEALS TO:**

Director of Police

Director General de la Policía Nacional Civil  
Edwin Johann Spirisen  
6ª Avenida 13-71, Zona 1, 1er nivel, Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Fax: + 502 2251 9382**

**Salutation: Estimado Sr/ Dear Sir**

Public Prosecutor's Office in Jutiapa

Fiscal Auxiliar  
Joaquin Mynor Coromac  
Ministerio Publico, 4 calle b, 4-31, zona 1, Jutiapa, Jutiapa, GUATEMALA

**Fax: + 502 78 44 11 61**

**Salutation: Estimado Fiscal/ Dear Sir**

Regional department of the Ministry of Education

Licda. Aura Marina Medrano Avila de Tobias  
Directora Departamental de Educacion  
Complejo Educativo, Barrio El Condo, Jutiapa, GUATEMALA

**Fax: + 502 78 44 4494**

**Salutation: Estimada Licenciada/ Dear Madam**

Presidential Commission for Human Rights  
Comisión Presidencial de Derechos Humanos (COPREDEH)

Lic. Frank La Rue, 2a. Avenida 10-50 Zona 9, Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

**Fax: + 502 2334 0119**

**Salutation: Estimado Licenciado/ Dear Sir**

**COPIES TO:**

Offices of STEG

Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Educación de Guatemala (STEG)

5 Av, 4 calle, zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

**Fax: + 502 22510484**

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 9 May 2006.