

PUBLIC

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11 September 2006

UA 245/06 Fear for safety / Death threats

MEXICO **Francisco Cerezo Contreras (m)**
Emiliana Cerezo Contreras (f), his sister
Members of the Cerezo Contreras family
Members of the human rights organisation *Comité Cerezo*

Francisco Cerezo Contreras and his sister Emiliana, human rights defenders and members of the organisation *Comité Cerezo*, have received a death threat via email. Their lives may be in danger.

The email was sent on 6 September to *Comite Cerezo*, and was opened by Francisco Cerezo Contreras at the organisation's office in Mexico City. It contained threats to the lives of Francisco Cerezo Contreras, Emiliana Cerezo Contreras and other members of their family. Among other threats, the email message reportedly said "*Francisco, el bastardo mayor (...), si sigue con sus cosas le ira ya bastante mal pues se le han permitido muchisimas pendejadas pero eso se terminara si deja este mundo cruel para que ya no sufra*". "Francisco, the older bastard, he's going to end in a bad way if he keeps at it. He's been allowed too much bullshit, but all that's going to end if he leaves this cruel world so he can stop suffering".

When the threatening email was sent to *Comite Cerezo*, Francisco Cerezo Contreras was working alone in Mexico City – the other members of the organisation were working outside Mexico City. The threat also made specific reference to the family's home address. The *Comite Cerezo* believe the threat may be linked to an incident on 8 May, when an unknown individual was seen apparently carrying out surveillance of the *Comite Cerezo* and its representatives, particularly Francisco Cerezo. The organisation reported this act of intimidation to the Federal Attorney General's Office (*Procuraduría General de la República*, PGR).

Francisco and Emiliana Cerezo Contreras founded *Comité Cerezo* when their three brothers, Alejandro, Hector and Antonio Cerezo Contreras and two others were arrested on 13 August 2001 in connection with explosions in a bank. They were reportedly tortured in detention, and were subsequently convicted of organized crime offences. On 28 February 2005, Alejandro Cerezo won his appeal and was released on grounds of lack of evidence. On 13 August 2006, Pablo Alvarado Flores, one of the two others arrested and convicted with the Cerezo brothers, was released having served his sentence. Antonio and Hector Cerezo Contreras remain in prison. *Comite Cerezo* continues to campaign for their release, as well as the release of other political prisoners in Mexico. In 2002, Amnesty International issued a UA on behalf of members of the *Comite Cerezo* after they received death threats and were subjected to intimidating surveillance (see UA 12/02, AMR 41/003/2002, 11 January 2002).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Francisco Cerezo Contreras, Emiliana Cerezo Contreras and the Cerezo Contreras family as well as other members of the *Comité Cerezo*;
- urging the authorities to carry out a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into the email threat received by the family, with the results of the investigation to be made public, and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of Francisco Cerezo Contreras, Emiliana Cerezo Contreras and their family;
- reminding the authorities that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals,

Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Carlos Abascal Carranza
Secretario de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez, Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P.06600, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5093 3414

Salutation: Dear Minister/ Señor Secretario

Attorney General of the Republic

Lic. Daniel Cabeza de Vaca
Procurador General de la República, Procuraduría General de la República
Reforma Cuauhtémoc esq.Violeta 75, Col. Guerrero, Delegación Cuauhtémoc
México D.F., C.P. 06 500, MEXICO

Fax: + 52 55 5346 0908

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado Procurador

Attorney General of Mexico City

Mtro. Bernardo Batiz Vásquez
Procurador General del Distrito Federal
Gabriel Hernández No. 56, 5to. Piso, Col. Doctores,
México DF., C.P. 06720, MEXICO.

Fax: + 52 55 5345 5529

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado Procurador

President of the National Human Rights Commission

Dr. José Luis Soberanes Fernández
Presidente de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH)
Periférico Sur 3469, 5º piso, Col. San Jerónimo Lídice
México D.F. 10200 , MEXICO

Fax: + 52 55 5681 7199

Salutation: Dear President / Estimado Presidente

COPIES TO:

Members of Comité Cerezo

Email: comitecerezo@nodo50.org

President of Mexico City Human Rights Commission

Mtro. Emilio Álvarez Icaza Longoria
Presidente de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal
Av. Chapultepec No. 49, Col. Centro C.P. 06040 Delegación Cuauhtémoc México DF., México.

Fax: + 52 55 578 2578

and 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 23 October 2006.