

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

1 February 2000

MEXICO

**Members of national human rights organization Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez (PRODH)**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of those who work with the *Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez* (PRODH), Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Centre, after they reportedly received two anonymous written threats on 31 January 2000.

Besides threatening PRODH members the messages make it clear that it is only the international support shown to the organization that has deterred those responsible for the threats from carrying them out.

PRODH has been repeatedly harassed and threatened since August 1999 when Digna Ochoa y Plácido, a human rights lawyer working with them, was abducted and threatened, though later released. In September the organization were sent a number of written death threats (see UA 233/99, AMR 41/23/99, 6 September 1999 and follow-up) and staff reported receiving threatening phone calls at their homes.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

PRODH is a non governmental human rights organization founded by Jesuits. The organization has long worked in collaboration with Amnesty International and has played an important role in investigating, documenting and defending human rights in Mexico.

In 1996 Amnesty International documented six separate occasions in which members of PRODH were intimidated and threatened (see UA 200/96, AMR 41/43/96, 13 August 1996).

Although the authorities have taken steps to protect the PRODH offices, Amnesty International is not aware of anyone having been brought to justice for any of these crimes.

On 7 June 1999, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted a resolution on Human Rights Defenders in the Americas which urged: "...member states to persist in their efforts to provide Human Rights Defenders with the necessary guarantees and facilities to continue freely carrying out their work of promoting and protecting human rights, at the national and/or regional levels, in accordance with internationally recognized principles and agreements".

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

- expressing concern for the safety of those working with the *Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez* (PRODH), Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Centre, after they reported having been sent anonymous written threats on 31 January 2000;
- asking the authorities to take all necessary steps, as agreed to by those at risk, to guarantee their safety;
- calling for a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into the most recent threats made to PRODH, for the findings be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- asking to be informed of any progress into investigations into previous threats and harassment of PRODH members;
- urging the government to adhere to its commitment to the resolution on Human Rights Defenders in the Americas, adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) on 7 June 1999;

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Attorney General of the Republic  
Lic. Jorge Madrazo  
Procurador General de la República  
Av Reforma, esq. Violeta  
Col Guerrero  
Mexico DF, CP 06300  
MEXICO

**Faxes: +525 346 0906**

**Salutation: Señor Procurador General/ Dear Attorney General**

Attorney General of Mexico City  
Lic Samuel Villar  
Procurador General de México DF  
Niños Héroes 61, 3er piso, Col. Doctores  
Mexico DF, CP 06720  
MEXICO

**Faxes: +52 5 133 7631**

**Salutation: Señor Procurador / Dear Attorney General**

Human Rights Commission of Mexico City  
Dr Luis Barreda Solórzano  
Presidente de la CDHDF  
Av. Chapultepec 49, Col. Centro  
México DF, CP 06040  
MEXICO

**Faxes: +525 681 8490 ("Me da tono de fax, por favor")**

**Salutation: Estimado Dr. / Dear Sr.**

**COPIES TO:**

Human Rights organization  
Centro de Derechos Humanos "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez"  
Serapio Rendón 57-B, Col. San Rafael  
México DF., CP 06470  
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 14 March 2000.