

EXTERNAL

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Fear for safety

7 February 1997

MEXICODOctor Maria Luisa Mussot (f), social rights activist

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On 25 January 1997 Doctor Maria Luisa Mussot, a representative of the *Coordinadora de Mujeres en Defensa de la Seguridad Social*, Coordinating Committee of Women in Defence of Social Security, and member of the *Frente por la Defensa de la Social Seguridad*, Front for the Defence of Social Security, received an anonymous, threatening phone call in which she was asked: "Está la doctora muerta?" ("Is the doctor dead?").

This is the first direct death threat she has received, but a campaign of intimidation against her began six months ago when she started receiving phone calls during which music of a threatening nature was played. On 20 January 1997 she received a much longer call of such music than she had previously had.

Maria Luisa Mussot has worked with unions and other civic organizations to campaign in defence of workers' social rights which are being adversely effected by a recently approved law, the *Ley del Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social*, Mexican Institute of Social Security Law. Other colleagues involved in the campaign have also suffered similar phone calls.

The intensification of the campaign of intimidation against Maria Luisa Mussot is believed to be related to the forthcoming publication of a book she has contributed to, analysing the decline in provision of social security services in Mexico.

Amnesty International is concerned that the campaign of intimidation against Maria Luisa Mussot is part of a pattern of such campaigns against social and human rights activists in Mexico, allegedly carried out by, or with the involvement of, members of the security forces. The failure to bring to justice those responsible and the lack of effective action to stop the perpetrators has apparently helped to fuel an increasing number of such campaigns of intimidation and threats.

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

- calling on the authorities to guarantee the physical safety of Doctor Maria Luisa Mussot;
- condemning the threats against Maria Luisa Mussot reportedly made for her role in highlighting the detrimental effects of the new social security law;
- calling for a prompt and full investigation into these threats in order to bring those responsible to justice; asking to be kept informed of any findings;
- expressing deep alarm about continuing human rights violations against social and human rights activists in Mexico;
- asking what action is currently being taken to put a stop to these incidents and to end the impunity currently enjoyed by most perpetrators.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) Minister of Interior  
Lic. Emilio Chuayffet Chemor  
Secretario de Gobernación  
Secretaría de Gobernación  
Bucarelli 99, 1er piso,

Col Juarez  
06699 México D.F., MÉXICO  
**Telegrams: Secretario de Gobernación, México DF, México**  
**Faxes: + 52 5 546 5350**  
**Salutation: Sr. Secretario/ Dear Minister**

2) Attorney General of the Republic  
Lic. Jorge Madrazo Cuellar  
Procuraduría General de la República  
Paseo de la Reforma y Violeta  
Col. Guerrero  
06300 México D.F., MEXICO  
**Telegrams: Sr. Procurador de la República, México D.F.**  
**Fax: +52 5 626 4419**  
**Salutation: Sr. Procurador de la República/Dear Attorney**

3) Attorney General of the Federal District  
Lic. José Antonio González Fernández  
Procurador del Distrito Federal  
Paseo de la Reforma 75  
México 06200 D.F.  
MEXICO  
**Telegrams: Sr. Procurador General del Distrito Federal, México D.F.**  
**Faxes: + 52 5 625 7081**  
**Salutation: Sr. Procurador/ Dear Attorney**

*When dialing fax numbers, if voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor"*

**COPIES TO:**

1) Daily newspaper  
Sr. Editor  
La Jornada  
Balderas 68  
06050 México D.F., MÉXICO

2) Human Rights Organization  
Centro de Derechos Humanos  
"Fray Francisco de Vitoria O.P." A.C.  
Odontología N.35 Col.  
Copilco Universidad  
México, D.F.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 27 March 1997.