

22 March 2002

**Further information on UA 233/99 (AMR 41/23/99, 6 September 1999) and follow-ups (AMR 41/24/99, 9 September 1999; AMR 41/036/2001, 22 October 2001) - Fear for Safety/ Death Threats**

**MEXICO** Bárbara Zamora (f) - Human Rights Lawyer  
Pilar Noriega (f) - Human Rights Lawyer

---

On 18 March, Bárbara Zamora, a leading human rights lawyer in Mexico city, received a threatening email. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for her safety as she has been threatened in the past and was a close colleague of Digna Ochoa, a prominent human rights lawyer found shot dead on 19 October 2001 in Mexico.

The email threat against Bárbara Zamora stated "...choques, accidentes, abogados, urgencias...", "...crashes, accidents, lawyers, emergencies..." and is apparently similar in tone and style to ones received by Digna Ochoa in 1996. More threats were sent to Digna Ochoa between 1996 and 1999, but the authorities repeatedly failed to effectively investigate them.

Bárbara Zamora reportedly received threatening telephone calls in 2001 including sounds of gunfire, shouts and requiem music. Those responsible however, have not been identified. She has reported the latest email threat to the *Procuraduría General de Justicia del Distrito Federal*, (PGJDF) Federal District Attorney General's Office and the authorities have reportedly offered to provide her with a bodyguard.

In October 2001, following Digna Ochoa's death, at the offices she shared with Bárbara Zamora, the Inter-American Court on Human Rights called on the Mexican government to implement protection measures to ensure the safety of a number of human rights defenders at risk, including Bárbara Zamora.

The official investigation into Digna Ochoa's death continues. Barbara Zamora and other prominent human rights defenders recently made strong public criticisms of the authorities, following leaked stories in the national media which appeared to indicate that the investigation would conclude that Digna Ochoa had committed suicide and had not been murdered. (Refer to news service Nr 45, 13 March 2002, AMR 41/013/2002).

Amnesty International is still concerned for the safety of Pilar Noriega, who worked with both Bárbara Zamora and Digna Ochoa on very high profile cases.

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

- expressing concern at the threatening email received on 18 March 2002 by human rights lawyer Bárbara Zamora, which is apparently similar in tone and style to those received by Digna Ochoa in 1996;
- urging the authorities to ensure Bárbara Zamora's and Pilar Noriega's safety by adopting protection measures in accordance her wishes;
- calling for a prompt, full and impartial investigation into the threatening email, for the results to be made public and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- reminding the authorities that the UN *Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties* recognizes the

legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

**APPEALS TO:**

**President of the Republic**

Lic. Vicente Fox Quesada  
Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos  
Residencia Oficial de "Los Pinos"  
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec  
Mexico D.F., C.P. 11850  
MÉXICO

**Telegrams: President, Mexico D.F., Mexico**

**Fax: (+525 55) 515 1794 / 516 9537**

**Salutation: Señor Presidente / Dear Mr President**

**Attorney General of the Federal District**

Mtro. Bernardo Bátiz Vázquez  
Procurador General del Distrito Federal  
Gabriel Hernández #56, 5° piso,  
col. Doctores,  
México D.F. 06720  
MEXICO

**Telegrams: Procurador General del D.F., Mexico D.F., Mexico**

**Fax: +52 55 5345 5529**

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

**Minister of the Interior**

Lic. Santiago Creel  
Secretario de Gobernación  
Secretaría de Gobernación  
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez  
Delegación Cuauhtémoc  
México D.F., C.P. 06600  
MEXICO

**Telegrams: Secretario de Gobernacion, Mexico D.F., Mexico**

**Fax: (+525 55) 703 2171 / 546 5350 / 546 7388**

**Salutation: Señor Secretario / Dear Minister**

**Attorney General of the Republic**

General Rafael Marcial Macedo de la Concha  
Procurador General de la República  
Procuraduría General de la República  
Reforma Norte esq. Violeta 75  
Col. Guerrero  
Delegación Cuauhtémoc  
México D.F., C.P. 06300  
MEXICO

**Telegrams: Procurador General de la República, Mexico D.F., Mexico**

**Fax: +52 5 346 0983/626 4419/346 0906/626 4426/346 2776**

**(If answered, say "Me da tono de fax, por favor")**

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

**COPIES TO:**

Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles  
de Derechos Humanos, "Todos los Derechos para Todos"  
Puebla 45, 1er. Piso

Col Roma  
06700 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 3 May 2002.