

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NEEDS PROTECTION

A Honduran human rights defender has received a threatening email message and a series of anonymous phone calls. Amnesty International believes that her life may be in danger.

On the evening of 17 July, **Gladys Lanza**, Coordinator for the Visitación Padilla Pro-Peace Women's Movement (Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz Visitación Padilla) received an email with the subject: "Hello old whore!!!" (Hola vieja puta!!!). Part of the email said: "...Now we're coming for you, you stupid old woman!!! [...] Billy Joya Amendola renewed." (Ahorita te caemos, vieja ignorante!!! [...] Billy Joya Amendola renovado). Many people in Honduras are fearful of Billy Joya, due to his reported activities with the 3-16 Battalion, a Honduran military intelligence unit which committed human rights violations in the 1980s. Six photographs were attached: an image of Billy Joya, a kitten holding a sniper rifle, a bizarre funeral procession led by men in prisoners' uniform, a watch with the time at 10.12, and two photographs of Gladys Lanza. Three hours before, Gladys Lanza had taken part in a radio programme produced by the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras, COFADEH), where she condemned the resurgence of militarism in Honduras and plans for the US government to establish new military bases in Honduras. During the programme, where different guests talked on the same subject and also mentioned general human rights issues in Honduras, a text message was sent to the programme: "You communists are the ones who deserve a kicking for being liars." (Ustedes comunistas son los que kieren patadas por mentirosos).

Throughout June, Gladys Lanza received four separate calls to her mobile phone, where all she could hear was heavy breathing. Calls from the same number continued throughout July, but Gladys Lanza stopped answering.

On 24 July 2009, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) called on the Honduran authorities to protect Gladys Lanza. This order has not been adequately implemented by the Honduran authorities. Commitments to hold regular meetings with Gladys Lanza and to organize police patrols around the Visitación Padilla office have not been fulfilled, leaving Gladys Lanza in danger.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling for an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats and harassment against Gladys Lanza;
- Urging that the authorities take immediate steps to fully comply with the IACHR order of 24 July 2009. The form of protection provided to Gladys Lanza must be agreed with her and reflect her own wishes;
- Reminding the authorities that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 SEPTEMBER 2010 TO:

President

Sr. Porfirio Lobo Sosa
 Presidente de la República
 Casa Presidencial
 Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo
 Palacio José Cecilio del Valle
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Fax: + 504 239 3298

Salutation: Dear President

Attorney General

Sr. Luis Alberto Rubí
 Fiscal General de la República
 Lomas del Guijarro, Avenida República
 Dominicana
 Edificio Lomas Plaza II
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Fax: + 504 221 5667

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

NGO

Comité de Familiares de Detenidos
 Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH)
 Barrio La Plazuela, Avenida Cervantes,
 Casa No. 1301
 Apartado Postal 1243
 Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS
 Fax: +504 220 5280 (say "tono de fax
 por favor")

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Visitación Padilla Pro-Peace Women's Movement (Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz Visitación Padilla) is a human rights organization which works to promote and defend women's rights. Visitación Padilla was one of the many Honduran women's organizations to play an active and visible role opposing the June 2009 coup d'état.

In October 2009, the radio programme "Entre Chonas", produced by Visitación Padilla, was cancelled by the management of the radio station which transmitted it. The management stated that the broadcasts violated an emergency presidential decree issued by the de facto government since they "failed to promote peace" and "discredited" the November 2009 electoral process.

On 9 March 2010, members of Visitación Padilla were on their way to an event they had organized for International Women's Day, to protest at the killing of women in Honduras and the impunity which frequently surrounds such crimes. At 12 pm, a member of Visitación Padilla parked the organization's car outside their office while she went inside to collect the materials and equipment needed for the event. When she and her colleagues came back to the car and drove off at 12.30 pm, they noticed that there was a problem with the car. When they took it to a mechanic he told them that one of the tyres had been deliberately cut.

Many people in Honduras are fearful of Billy Joya, due to his reported activities with the 3-16 Battalion, a Honduran military intelligence unit which was charged with the task of targeting political suspects and carrying out their abduction, detention, torture and murder in the 1980s.

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