

PERU Rosalía Stork Salazar, human rights defender

Rosalía Stork Salazar, a lawyer and human rights defender, has been warned that her home and office may be subject to an unlawful search by a Police Chief, who has previously been accused of torture. Amnesty International is concerned for her safety.

Rosalía Stork Salazar is the President of a local human rights organization, CODAH (*Comisión de Derechos Humanos "Alto Hualлага"*, Human Rights Commission), in the town of Aucayacu, Huánuco Department. She represents victims of human rights abuses in legal proceedings, and reportedly brought criminal charges against the said Aucayacu Police Chief on two occasions, most recently on 24 July 2000. The police chief was accused of committing torture, issuing threats, entering premises without a search warrant, confiscating property illicitly and abusing his authority.

On 1 August, Rosalía Stork Salazar reportedly received information that the Police Chief intends to search her home and CODHAH's offices. He has alleged that the organization has links with armed opposition groups and that he will find evidence against them of terrorism-related activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights defenders in Peru are constantly harassed, intimidated and threatened. The Peruvian authorities have taken few, if any, steps to stop such attacks, to bring those responsible to justice and to ensure human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear.

CODHAH is a member of *Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDDHH)*, National Coordinating body for human rights, an umbrella organisation established in the 1980s in response to systematic human rights abuses perpetrated by the security forces and the armed opposition. Bringing together 61 independent human rights organisations, the CNDDHH has played a prominent role in conveying the serious situation in Peru to the government and the international community.

In June 1999, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted a resolution stating their intention to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organizations of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, passed by the United Nations (UN) on 9 December 1998. The UN agreed to "recognize and support the work carried out by Human Rights Defenders and their valuable contribution to the promotion, observance, and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms in the Americas". The resolution called on member states to provide "Human Rights Defenders with the necessary guarantees and facilities to continue freely carrying out their work of promoting and protecting human rights", as well as to adopt "the necessary steps to guarantee their life, liberty, and integrity".

If the Peruvian authorities are serious about allowing human rights defenders carry out their work, they must abide by the letter and spirit of international human rights standards. By doing so they would send a clear signal that intimidation of human rights defenders will not be tolerated.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Rosalía Stork Salazar and urging the authorities to take effective steps to protect her;
- calling on the authorities to conduct an independent and impartial investigation of possible illegal police investigations into CODAH's activities;
- urging the government to adhere to its obligations regarding human rights defenders as laid out in UN and OAS resolutions.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Interior

Gral EP Walter Chacón Málaga
Ministro del Interior
Plaza 30 de agosto s/n Urb. Córpac
San Isidro
Lima 27
Peru

Fax:+ 511 475 3419

Salutation:Dear Minister / Sr.Ministro

Attorney General

Dr. Blanca Nélide Colán
Fiscal de la Nación
Fiscalía de la Nación
Av. Abancay, cuadra 5 s/n
Lima 1
Peru

Fax: + 511 426 4620

Salutation:Dear Attorney General / Sra. Fiscal de la Nación

COPIES TO:

Non-governmental human rights organisation

Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos, CNDDHH
Jr. Túpac Amaru 2467
Lince,
Lima, 14
Peru

e-mail: Postmast@cnddhh.org.pe

and to diplomatic representatives of PERU accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 October 2000.