

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION ATTACKED IN MEXICO

The office of a human rights organization in Chihuahua in northern Mexico has been attacked. This could be connected to their work on human rights and the staff's security may be at risk.

On 4 April, members of the Women's Human Rights Centre (Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres, **CEDEHM**) found a window broken in their office. The attackers had smashed the window with stones and there was broken glass inside the office. Members of CEDEHM alerted the Municipal Police (Policía Municipal) but despite there being a pre-arranged system in place for the Municipal Police to react rapidly to threats, they only arrived after one and a half hours.

CEDEHM has reported the attack to the Chihuahua State Attorney's Office.

Since 2008 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, IACHR (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos) has requested that the government of Mexico puts precautionary measures in place for CEDEHM. In February 2013, the Inter American Court of Human Rights ordered provisional protection measures specifically for **Luz Estela Castro**, CEDEHM's general co-ordinator, due to the increasing threats and hostility against her as a result of her human rights work.

The attack happened two days after CEDEHM members and officials from the Chihuahua State government held a meeting to review the implementation of the additional precautionary measures for members of CEDEHM and other human rights defenders.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Express concern for the safety of all CEDEHM members, including Luz Estela Castro, and urge the authorities to provide them with effective protection in strict accordance with their wishes and with the precautionary and provisional measures granted by the Inter American Commission and Court of Human Rights;
- Call on the authorities to carry out a full, swift and impartial investigation into the attack on CEDEHM's office on 4 April, for the results to be made public and those responsible held to account, and to review the rapid response agreement with the Chihuahua city Municipal Police;
- Remind the authorities of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of reprisals as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 MAY 2013 TO:

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. Cesar Duarte Jáquez
Palacio de Gobierno, 1er piso, C.
Aldama #901, Col. Centro,
Chihuahua, Estado de Chihuahua, C.P.
31000, México
Fax: +52 614 429 3464
Email:
despachodelejecutivo@hotmail.com
Salutation: Dear Governor

Minister of the Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong
Secretario de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, col. Juárez, Cuauhtemoc,
Distrito Federal, México, C.P. 6600
Fax: +52 55 5093 3414 (please keep
trying)
Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

Local organization

Women's Human Rights Centre (Centro
de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres)
Email:
comunicacion.cedehm@gmail.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CEDEHM is a human rights organization which provides advocacy and protection to victims of domestic and sexual violence, killing of women, enforced disappearance and other serious human rights violations. This organization also legally represents other defenders in the region who are in extreme risk.

Defending human rights can be a dangerous job in Mexico. Scores of activists have suffered death threats, intimidation, and harassment in the last few years. Some of them have been killed for doing their job.

A Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists was unanimously approved by both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and signed by the President, in 2012. The process for implementing the law has now started, including the direct participation of representatives of civil society, but operational protocols, clear guidelines on cooperation between federal and state authorities and resources urgently need to be put in place to guarantee its effectiveness. It is vital that the authorities do not assume that their responsibilities are restricted to establishing a protection mechanism and that there is a vital flow of communication between the federal, state and municipal governments.

Name: CEDEHM members and Luz Estela Castro (f)

Gender m/f: m & f

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