

MEXICO César Salazar Góngora

César Salazar Góngora, a gay man living in Merida, Yucatan state, was brutally attacked and sexually assaulted by three men on 10 August, and has received repeated telephone death threats since he reported the attack. Amnesty International is concerned that the authorities have failed in their duty to protect him or to adequately investigate either the attack or the death threats.

César Salazar Góngora reported the attack to an office of the State Attorney General (*Procuraduría de Justicia del Estado*, PJE) on 13 August. When he went back to the PJE on 27 August he found that his original complaint had been lost. PJE agents denied ever receiving the report.

César Salazar Góngora insisted on registering his report of the attack again, although the PJE agents said they would only accept it if he agreed not to make any reference to his previous complaint. When he tried to add to his report that he had received repeated telephone death threats for reporting the attack, PJE agents reportedly told him these threats were unimportant and did not merit investigation.

After the case attracted national media attention, the Yucatan State Attorney General (*Procurador de Justicia del Estado*) agreed to meet César Salazar Góngora on 4 September. He gave a commitment that the PJE would speed up its investigation and provide protection within two days. However, it appears that nothing was done to protect César Salazar Góngora, who has since been forced to go into hiding after he received further threats at his family's house.

According to members of his family, PJE and police agents came to the house, apparently to investigate the attack and threats. However, they reportedly subjected the family to intimidatory questioning, intended to discredit César Salazar Góngora's testimony. The irregular manner of the police and PJE questioning has heightened his **family's concern for him**.

Despite his undertaking of 6 September, the State Attorney General has reportedly failed to tell the family anything about the investigation. Although his home is the place where he has received repeated death threats, the Attorney General even warned that César Salazar Góngora would be arrested if he was not at home to answer telephone calls.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has received several reports of homosexuals and other sexual minorities being attacked and even killed. In many cases the authorities have reportedly failed to take adequate steps to protect those at risk or investigate the attacks effectively so as to bring those responsible to justice.

In the last six months four homosexuals have reportedly been killed in the state of Colima. The state authorities have reportedly failed to respond effectively and have said that they are not responsible for protecting those who may be at risk.

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

- expressing grave concern that the Yucatan State Attorney General's Office apparently failed to respond appropriately when César Salazar Góngora reported

that he had suffered a serious assault on 10 August 2001, and calling for this failure to be thoroughly investigated;

- calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to protect César Salazar Góngora and his family, in accordance with their own wishes, and to bring the people who attacked him to justice;

- asking what action has been taken to investigate the attack and death threats (please quote case file number 168/21°/01);

- reminding the authorities of their responsibility to act promptly to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people against violence within the community.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Yucatan State

Gobernador Patricio Patrón Laviada

Palacio Gubernamental

Calle 61 Col. Centro

Mérida 97000, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

Fax: + 52 99 280 900

email: www.yucatan.gob.mx/comentarios.htm

Salutation: Estimado Gobernador/Dear Governor

Attorney General of State of Yucatan

Procurador Miguel Angel Díaz Herrera

Calle 22 No. 157 ()

Merida 97205, Yucatan, Mexico

Fax: + 52 99 280 900

Salutation: Señor Procurador /Dear Attorney

Attorney General of the Republic

General Rafael Marcial Macedo de la Concha

Procurador General de la Republica

Procuraduría General de la República

Reforma Norte esq. Violeta 75

Col. Guerrero, delegación Cuauhtémoc

México D.F., C.P. 06300

MEXICO

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

Fax: + 52 5 346 2776 / 346 0904

Salutation: Señor Procurador General / Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

Gay rights organisation

Grupo Indignación, Apdo. 110-97310 Cordemex, Mérida, Yucatán, MEXICO

E-mail: ipddh@sureste.com

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 31 October 2001.