

URGENT ACTION

WOMAN LIVING ON DISPUTED LAND SHOT

A woman living in the Lomas del Poleo area of Chihuahua state, northern Mexico, was shot and injured on 4 December. Those living in Lomas del Poleo, particularly those representing local inhabitants in a dispute with landowners, are at risk of further acts of intimidation and attack.

On 4 December, two armed men wearing balaclavas came to the door of **Adelaida Plasencia Sierra's** home in Lomas del Poleo. When she opened the door, they initially told her they wanted to sell her a mobile phone. When Adelaida Plasencia refused to buy the phone, they suggested she talk to her husband, Vicente. Adelaida Plasencia did not recognize the men and was surprised that they knew her husband's name. The men then grabbed her and tried to force her into a car. She escaped and ran towards her house, but the men shot her. One bullet fractured three of her ribs. The men then shot a further nine bullets into the air and drove off. Adelaida Plasencia is recovering in hospital.

Since 2004, the Lomas del Poleo area has been surrounded by a barbed wire fence, with the entrance patrolled by private security guards hired by landowners who contest the ownership of the land. People living there have been harassed and attacked since 2003. In 2005, according to local inhabitants, 40 homes were set on fire and a resident was beaten to death by the guards. Today very few families still live in the area. They claim that despite reporting the incidents to the local Public Prosecutor's office, no serious investigation has ever been carried out.

Adelaida Plasencia has given evidence at an agrarian tribunal that is considering the land dispute between the residents of Lomas del Poleo and a local landowning family. The latest attack is thought to be part of an attempt to intimidate those taking part in the tribunal. Every day for two weeks before this attack, Adelaida Plasencia had noticed that a white car without number plates was parked in front of her house. She believes this was also an attempt to intimidate her. Amnesty International is not aware of any further acts of intimidation against the individuals previously threatened in Lomas del Poleo: **Agustina Contreras, Carmen Quiñones Ortíz, Alfredo Piñon Valenzuela and Martin Gabino.**

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language, calling on the authorities:

- To ensure that Adelaida Plasencia Sierra and other residents of Lomas del Poleo who have been attacked by security guards working for local landowners are given appropriate protection according to their wishes;
- To order independent and impartial investigations into the attacks committed against residents, and bring those responsible to justice;
- To prevent any illegal attempt to drive residents of Lomas de Poleo off their land and to expedite efforts to ensure the dispute is resolved fairly and satisfactorily in the appropriate agrarian tribunal.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JANUARY 2010 TO:

Governor of Chihuahua State

Lic. José Reyes Baeza Terrazas
Gobernador del Estado de Chihuahua,
Palacio de Gobierno, 1er piso, C.
Aldama #901, Col. Centro,
Chihuahua, Estado de Chihuahua, C.P.
31000, Mexico

**Fax: +52 614 429 3300 (then dial
extension 11066 when prompted)**

**Salutation: Señor Gobernador/Dear
Governor**

Attorney General of Chihuahua

Patricia González Rodríguez
Procuradora del Estado de Chihuahua
Procuraduría General de Justicia del
Estado
Vicente Guerrero 616, Col. Centro
Chihuahua 31000, Mexico

Fax: +52 614 415 0314

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
Señora Procuradora**

Mayor of Ciudad Juárez

Lic. José Reyes Ferriz
Presidente Municipal de Ciudad Juárez
Unidad Administrativa Benito Juárez.
Primer piso, ala norte.
Av. Francisco Villa # 950 Norte, Cd.
Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico

Fax: +52 656 615 0690

**Salutation: Dear Mayor/Señor
Presidente Municipal**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Mexico accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 15/09 (AMR 41/004/2009). Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/004/2009/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/048/2009/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The land of Lomas del Poleo has acquired particular value in recent years as it stands between the city of Ciudad Juárez and an area which is destined to be developed into a new urban and industrial area by a group of businessmen.

An agrarian tribunal has held a number of hearings between the residents of Lomas del Poleo and a local landowning family, but the case has been progressing very slowly.

Further information on UA: 15/09 Index: AMR 41/065/2009 Issue Date: 10 December 2009

