

# URGENT ACTION

## TORTURE VICTIM'S FAMILY AND LAWYER THREATENED

**Blanca Mesina, the daughter of a Mexican torture victim in Tijuana, has received a death threat. The victim's lawyer, Silvia Vázquez Camacho, has also received a death threat and her family's van has been petrol bombed.**

Miguel Angel Mesina López was one of 25 police officers detained and tortured by the military in Tijuana, Baja California state, in March 2009. On 28 February 2010, his daughter, **Blanca Mesina Navarez**, received a telephone threat. Blanca Mesina has worked with human rights lawyer, **Silvia Vázquez Camacho** and the Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights (Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, CMDPDH) to press for justice in her father's case, including appearing before the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in October 2009.

On 2 February 2010, Silvia Vázquez Camacho's parents received a threatening phone call at home. On 17 February, her parents heard sounds from outside their house and went to investigate. They saw the family's van on fire and two men fleeing. After extinguishing the fire, they saw that the window had been smashed and they found the remains of a Molotov cocktail inside, which had been used to set the fire.

As well as Miguel Angel Mesina López's case, Silvia Vázquez Camacho and CMDPDH have been documenting human rights violations of other criminal suspects held in the military base in Tijuana, including torture or other ill-treatment.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling for Blanca Mesina Navarez, Silvia Vázquez Camacho and her family to receive effective protection, in line with their wishes;
- Calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation of the telephone threats against both women and the attack on the vehicle of Silvia Vázquez' family;
- Urging that possible links between public officials and those behind the threats are fully investigated;
- Reminding the authorities of their commitment to uphold the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders which recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without obstacles or fear of reprisals.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 APRIL 2010 TO:

#### Minister of the Interior

Lic. Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont  
Urueta

Secretario de Gobernación

Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juárez,  
Delegación Cuauhtémoc, México D.F.,  
06600, MÉXICO

Fax: +52 55 5093 3414

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

#### Governor of Baja California State

Lic. José Guadalupe Osuna Millan  
Gobernador del Estado de Baja  
California

Edificio del Poder Ejecutivo 3er Piso,  
Calzada Independencia No. 994,  
Mexicali B.C. CP 21000

Fax: (686) 558-1178

Email: [gobernador@baja.gob.mx](mailto:gobernador@baja.gob.mx)

Salutation: Sr Gobernador/  
Dear Governor

#### Attorney General of the Republic

Arturo Chávez Chávez

Procurador General de la República  
Procuraduría General de la República

Av. Paseo de la Reforma nº 211-213,  
Col. Cuauhtémoc, Del. Cuauhtémoc  
México D.F., C.P. 06500, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5346 0908

Email: [ofproc@pgr.gob.mx](mailto:ofproc@pgr.gob.mx)

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/  
Señor Procurador General

Also send copies to the Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights (*Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos*), Tehuantepec 142, Col. Roma Sur, 06760 México, DF and to diplomatic representatives of Mexico 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

In Blanca Mesina Navarez's telephone threat, she was told to "drop the police case now bitch or it is going to go badly for you" (hija de tu chingada madre, ya deja el asunto de los policias o te va a ir mal).

In the threatening phone call that Silvia Vázquez Camacho's parents received, the caller said: "I know who you are and I now know where you live...you are going around denouncing many things...the Zetas (a notorious criminal gang) are looking for you to kill you" ("ya sé quién eres, te tengo ubicada...tú andas denunciando muchas cosas... los zetas te están buscando para matarte"). The caller then identified himself as belonging to the Baja California State Attorney General's Office and said "they are going to kill her if she carries on denouncing, they are already after her" ("se van a chingar a esta vieja si sigue denunciando,ya la están buscando").

Human rights defenders in Mexico face threats, attacks, politically motivated criminal charges and imprisonment for leading protests or promoting respect for human rights. The government has agreed to provide protection measures to defenders at risk, but has yet to develop a mechanism for delivering effective and credible protection in many cases. In particular, the investigations into those behind threats and attacks rarely result in the prosecution of perpetrators; impunity is the general rule in these cases, leaving open the possibility of further attacks.

In November 2009 Amnesty International issued a report, *Mexico: New reports of human rights violations by the military*, AMR 41/058/2009 which documented several cases of arbitrary detention and torture at the military base in Tijuana, Baja California state and the efforts of victims, relatives and human rights defenders to file complaints. These cases are routinely investigated and tried by the military justice system, which does not guarantee an impartial and independent investigation, resulting in impunity for the vast majority of perpetrators.

The CMDPDH has submitted a request to the Inter American Commission of Human Rights to issue *medidas cautelares* (protection measures) requiring the Mexican authorities to guarantee Silvia Vázquez Camacho's safety.

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