

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AT RISK

Lydia Cacho, a journalist and human rights defender, who is based in Cancún, Quintana Roo state, southern east Mexico, has received new death threats by email and telephone. There are serious fears over her safety and security.

On 14 June **Lydia Cacho** received a death threat by email, which was sent to the Lydia Cacho Foundation (*Fundación Lydia Cacho*) based in Spain. On 17 June she received another threat by telephone from an unknown man. Both threats referred to her work as a journalist and warn her to shut her mouth or she would be killed, and that this was her last warning. Complaints have been filed with the Police both in Mexico (*Dirección General de la Policía*), and in Spain (*Guardia Civil*).

Lydia Cacho started to receive multiple threats and harassment after publishing a book in 2005, in which she exposed a child pornography ring which allegedly operated with the knowledge and protection of politicians and business people of the Quintana de Roo and Puebla states. As a result of defamation cases brought against Lydia Cacho and irregular legal proceedings, she was temporarily detained in December 2006 and subject to threats and harassment. Following this, taped phone conversations which were published in the media implicated the former senior government officials of Puebla State in her detention and harassment. She continued to receive threats in the following years, on some occasions in reprisal for her work as journalist and human rights defender at a women's shelter in Cancún.

In 2009, The Inter-American Human Rights Commission, IAHR (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, CIDH) requested that the Mexican government provide protection measures (*medidas cautelares*) for Lydia Cacho. In 2010, Lydia Cacho published another book, again uncovering trafficking of women and girls and revealing names of individuals allegedly linked to these criminal networks.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Express concern for the security of Lydia Cacho and request that the Mexican government guarantees her security;
- Urge the authorities to provide Lydia Cacho with effective protection measures in accordance with her wishes, and as ordered by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights;
- Call on the authorities to carry out a swift, full and impartial investigation into the anonymous threats, and for those responsible for the threats and intimidation against Lydia Cacho to be brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 AUGUST 2011 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Lic. José Francisco Blake Mora
 Secretario de Gobernación
 Bucareli 99, 1er. Piso, Col. Juárez
 Delegación Cuauhtemoc
 México DF, CP 06600
 Fax: +52 55 50933414 (a voice will ask
 for the extension: dial 32356)

Salutation: Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic

Marisela Morales Ibáñez
 Procuradora General de Justicia de la
 República, Av. Paseo de la reforma
 211 – 213, Col. Cuauhtemoc, Del.
 Cuauhtemoc, México D.F., MEXICO
 Fax: +52 55 5346 0908 (keep trying)

Email: mmoralesi@pgr.gob.mx

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

Fundación Lydia Cacho
 C/ Gravina 13. 1º Izquierda
 Madrid
 Madrid
 28004
 España

Fax: +34 91 521 63 94

Email: info@fundacionlydiacacho.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

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

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Journalists and media workers in Mexico face serious risk of being attacked or murdered as a result for their work. According to the National Human Rights Commission at least 70 journalists have been killed since 2000 and the whereabouts of 13 other abducted journalists remain unknown. Those investigating or reporting on crime and corruption are particularly vulnerable to attack or intimidation. In the vast majority of cases, perpetrators are not brought to justice, creating a climate of impunity.

Lydia Cacho was nominated for the 2007 Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

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