

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 41/058/2008

07 November 2008

Further Information on UA 167/07 (AMR 41/028/2007, 28 June 2007) and follow-up (AMR 41/026/2008, 28 May 2008) - Fear for safety/Death threats

MEXICO

Marisela Ortíz Rivera (f), human rights defender;
Norma Andrade (f), human rights defender;
María Luisa García Andrade (f), human rights defender;
Other members of Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa (Our Daughters Return Home)

Human rights defenders María Luisa García Andrade and Marisela Ortíz Rivera have received written death threats. The threats were sent within days of the screening of “Bajo Juárez: The city devouring its daughters”, a documentary on the killings of women in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua City, Chihuahua state.

Amongst those who feature in the documentary is Lilia Alejandra García Andrade, the murdered daughter of Norma Andrade and sister of María Luisa García. The latter and Marisela Ortíz feature in the film as they are prominent campaigners from Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa (NHRC), an organization which calls for justice on behalf of women murdered in the region.

According to an eyewitness, on 30 October a dark car with tinted windows approached María Luisa García’s home in Ciudad Juárez while she was out. A man got out of the car, threw a stone at the house which broke a window through which he threw a large card which threatened to kill her and harm her children.

On 5 November, Marisela Ortíz also found in front of her home a card with letters pasted on to it saying “Under Juarez, death” (*Vajo* (sic) *Juarez muerte*). Both women have filed a complaint with the Federal Special Prosecutor on Violence against Women and People Trafficking.

Concerns for members of NHRC are heightened by the fact that they have previously been threatened in the past. In May 2008, following the opening of the film “Bordertown”, which was loosely based on the stories of women murdered in the region, NHRC members received an offensive and threatening email following their support of the film’s release as a way of raising awareness of the killings of women in Ciudad Juárez.

Since the members of NHRC and their families were threatened in May 2008, there have been no advances in the investigation and the search for those responsible. Marisela Ortíz Rivera and María Luisa García Andrade have only received limited protection by federal police agents and no attention by the Chihuahua Attorney General’s office or protection by state police, even though the Inter American Commission for Human Rights ordered the Mexican government to provide protection measures for them.

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

- expressing concern at the new threats received by María Luisa García on 30 October and Marisela Ortíz on 5 November;
- calling on the authorities to put in place comprehensive protection measures for them and their families, in accordance with her own wishes;
- urging the authorities to carry out an immediate and impartial investigation to identify those responsible for the threats received by María Luisa García and Marisela Ortíz and to bring them to justice;
- calling on the authorities to provide information on the steps taken to investigate previous threats against them and other leading members of Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa in May 2008;

- calling on the authorities to fulfil their obligations under the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and ensure that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS 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

Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

Chihuahua State Attorney General

Patricia González Rodríguez

Procuradora del Estado de Chihuahua, Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado

Vicente Guerrero 616, Col. Centro, Chihuahua 31000, Estado de Chihuahua, MEXICO

Fax: +52 614 415 0314

Salutation: Señora Procuradora General / Dear Public Prosecutor

COPIES TO:

Special Prosecutor on Violence against Women and People Trafficking

Dra. Guadalupe Morfín Otero

Fiscal Especial para los Delitos de Violencia contra las Mujeres y Trata de Personas

Procuraduría General de la República,

Río Elba, No. 17, Col. Cuauhtemoc, Del. Cuauhtemoc, México D.F., C.P. 06300, MEXICO

Fax: +52 55 5346 2540

Email: atencionmujeres@pgr.gob.mx

Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa

Email: nuestrashijas@gmail.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 19 December 2008.