

via fax: 011 52 983 832 4257 <b>Lic. Felix Gonzlez Canto</b> Governor of Quintana Roo, Mexico	via fax: 011 52 844 438 0700 <b>Lic. Oscar Calderon Rocha</b> Attorney General of Coahuila, Mexico
via fax: 011 52 983 832 3174 <b>Lic. Bello Melcho Rodriguez Carrillo</b> Attorney General of Quintana Roo	via fax: 011 52 55 53 46 09 83/08 <b>Lic. Daniel Cabeza de Vaca</b> Attorney General, Mexico

July 26, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are extremely concerned for the safety of all staff members of the Women's Assistance Center (CIAM), especially for its president, **Lydia Cacho Ribeiro**, who has recently received further threats as a result of her work to protect the rights of women and girls. From April 25 to July 1 she received at least 42 threatening telephone calls at CIAM's office in Cancun, Quintana Roo state. All the calls were made by a former police officer from the State Judicial Police Force in Coahuila state whose wife and children are being sheltered by CIAM. The same man was responsible for a series of threats against Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and CIAM staff earlier this year and in November 2004. In recent calls, the man said: "This is for Lydia Cacho for her to be aware that I'll be in Cancun soon, when she is least expecting me...The Attorney General's Office cannot do anything to me ...whoever messes with me dies".

On March 10 federal agents told Lydia Cacho that the former police officer had fled Mexico. However, eyewitnesses claim that they saw the man in the northern states of Nuevo Leon and Coahuila in March. The recent series of calls were made from these states. On June 30 the man visited the women's shelter in Saltillo, Coahuila, where he harassed the manager of the shelter, demanding that she tell Lydia Cacho to stop speaking out about his case and that his wife and children be returned to him.

Authorities never filed any charges against the former police officer regarding the threats against Lydia Cacho and CIAM staff members. Although he is under investigation by the federal authorities because of his links with organized crime, judges have refused to issue a warrant for his arrest. The little protection that CIAM staff in Cancun had received from state authorities was withdrawn following the election of a new administration in Quintana Roo in April.

Therefore, **we strongly urge that you**

- immediately strengthen measures to guarantee the safety of Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and the CIAM staff, according to their wishes;
- act decisively to prevent the former police officer from intimidating Lydia Cacho Ribeiro and the CIAM staff and to ensure he is prosecuted for criminal offenses he has committed;
- investigate how the former police officer has been allowed to remain at liberty to make further threats, despite clear evidence of criminal offenses;
- carry out your obligation defined by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (December 1993), which calls on states to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Coordinator

cc: Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez, Embassy of Mexico ~ via fax: 1 202 728 1698  
 Antonio O. Garza, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Mexico ~ fax: 011 52 55 5511 9980  
 William Duncan, Desk Officer for Mexico ~ fax: 202.647.9894  
 U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via email  
 U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA37/05 Mexico

**The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter:**