

Fax: 011 502 2413 8658 <b>Sr. Francisco Jose Jimenez Irungray</b> Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Guatemala	Fax: 011 502 2230 6043 <b>Lic. Aura Marina Mancilla</b> Human Rights Prosecutor of Guatemala
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October 5, 2009

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are seriously concerned for the safety of **Norma Cruz**, Director of Survivors' (Sobrevivientes) Foundation, **her family and her colleagues**. On May 14 a man left two answering machine messages, threatening to kill Norma Cruz and her colleagues.

On August 14 at 8.30am, a dark car with tinted windows followed Norma Cruz's daughter's husband. The police, whom he had alerted his wife to call, were at his home when he arrived a few minutes later. The same car approached, but sped off when the men inside saw the police. Men have been keeping watch on the Fundacion Sobrevivientes office since at least July 26.

Sobrevivientes Foundation provides psychological support to women victims of sexual violence and other forms of domestic violence. It also provides legal assistance in cases of killings of women and has investigated high-profile cases of trafficking of people in which government officials could be involved. The Foundation believes the recent acts of intimidation are related to a particular case they are currently supporting. We have previously written to you (see our letter of Nov. 16, 2008) about attacks on Norma Cruz and those close to her.

These attacks are further examples of attempts to stop human rights workers from carrying out their legitimate work. For the most part, nobody is brought to justice for these crimes and the Minister of the Interior has yet to approve and put in practice a national protection program for human rights defenders which was finalized earlier this year.

Therefore, **we strongly urge** that you

- take immediate and on-going measures to guarantee the safety of Norma Cruz, her family and colleagues in strict accordance with their wishes;
- order an immediate, thorough and swift investigation into the incidents described above, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- approve and implement, as soon as possible, the national protection program for human rights defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

cc: Fundacion Sobrevivientes ~ via mail  
Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908  
Stephen McFarland, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477  
Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3992  
Brett Hamsak, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597  
Christopher Webster, Director, Office of Central American Affairs, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597  
US Senators Brown & Voinovich ~ via email  
US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

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