

via fax: 011 52 55 5093 3414

**Estimado Dr. Alejandro Poiré Romero**  
Minister of Interior of Mexico

via fax: 011 52 55 5346 0908

**Estimada Sra. Marisela Morales Ibáñez**  
Attorney General of Mexico

August 12, 2012

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are extremely concerned about the death threats to **Lydia Cacho, a human rights defender and international award-winning journalist in Cancún**. On July 29 she was working at home when her handheld transceiver, used only for emergencies, turned on. When she answered, thinking it might be a work colleague, a male voice called her by name and said: "We have already warned you...What is coming next for you will be in pieces, that is how we will send you home, you idiot." She has filed a formal complaint about this threat with the Office of the Attorney General.

This is a continuation of the threats to Lydia Cacho that she started to receive in 2005 after publishing a book that exposed a child pornography ring that involved the knowledge and protection of politicians and business people of Quintana Roo and Puebla states. As a result of defamation cases brought against her and irregular legal proceedings, she was detained in December 2005 and subjected to threats and harassment. Taped phone conversations that were later published in the media implicated former senior government officials of Puebla in her detention and harassment. Defamation charges against her were dropped in February 2007.

In March 2009, the National Human Rights Commission concluded that Lydia Cacho had suffered physical and psychological ill-treatment at the hands of the police who detained her. Also in 2009, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission ordered the Mexican government to provide protection measures (*medidas cautelares*) for her. In 2010 she published another book, again uncovering trafficking of women and girls and revealing names of people she said were linked to these criminal networks.

This is a further example of the serious risks of being attacked or murdered for their work faced by journalists in Mexico. According to the National Human Rights Commission at least 70 journalists have been killed since 2000 and the whereabouts of 13 others, who were abducted, are unknown. Those investigating or reporting on crime and corruption are particularly vulnerable to attack or intimidation. A climate of impunity results because, in the vast majority of cases, the perpetrators are not brought to justice.

We have previously written on behalf of Lydia Cacho because of our concern for her safety. **We again urge you to:**

- provide Lydia Cacho with effective protection measures, in accordance with her wishes, and as ordered by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights;
- order a swift, full and impartial investigation into the death threats and bring those responsible to justice.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Fundación Lydia Cacho ~ via email  
 Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana, Mexican Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 728 1698  
 Earl Anthony Wayne, US Ambassador to Mexico ~ via fax: 011-52-55-5080-2834  
 Greg Sprow, Mexico Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202.647.5752  
 Rodrigo Escobar Gil, Rapporteur for Mexico, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 228/12 Mexico

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