

URGENT ACTION



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20 May 2008

UA 133/08 Fear for safety

MEXICO **Sister Consuelo Morales Elizondo (f), Director of CADHAC**
Other members of CADHAC

Sister Consuelo Morales has been followed, threatened and subjected to surveillance by unidentified men, in an attempt to intimidate her and stop her legitimate activities in defense of human rights. Sister Consuelo Morales is the Director of the human rights organization Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos A.C (CADHAC) based in the northern Mexican state of Nuevo León.

CADHAC supported a group of people who were trying to regain access to a piece of land located in Nueva Castilla, municipality of Escobedo, from which they had been evicted. The evictees tried to access the land on 16 May after winning a suspension of the eviction order. During the attempt to gain access, 31 of the evicted were arrested along with Alonso Aguirre, a member of CADHAC who had been accompanying them. In the following days, 26 evictees and Alonso Aguirre were set free.



In recent months, CADHAC has been coordinating the protest activities against the creation of a residential and leisure complex in an environmentally protected area of land called “Parque Nacional Cumbres de Monterrey”, not far from the state capital, Monterrey. This development, which entails an investment of \$500 million has attracted the interest of large local businesses and could seriously impact on the environment and the water resources of several municipalities. The latest demonstration against this project, on 18 May, saw the participation of approximately 400 people and was organized by CADHAC.

The day before the demonstration, Sister Consuelo Morales' car, which had been borrowed by a friend of hers, was overtaken by another car with three men, and made to stop. One of the three men traveling in the car got out and made towards Consuelo Morales' car. As the man approached the car and was near enough to see the driver clearly, he stopped, went back to his vehicle and left. Later on the same day, the office of CADHAC received a phone call warning her to keep out of it, “bloody nun!” (*no te acerques, pinche monja*).

On 19 May, Consuelo Morales, noticed a white van with tinted windows stationed opposite her home. During the time in which she watched the vehicle it moved slightly out of sight and then left half an hour later.

Amnesty International fears that these acts of intimidation may be in retaliation to CADHAC's recent activities for the defense of human rights in the region and is concerned for the safety of CADHAC's members.

Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- calling for a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the surveillance and the threats suffered by Consuelo Morales, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- calling on the authorities to take appropriate protection measures to guarantee Consuelo Morales's safety and that of other members of CADHAC so they can carry out her legitimate activities;
- reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Nuevo León

Lic. José Natividad González Paras
Gobernador del Estado de Nuevo León

Palacio de Gobierno
Zaragoza y 5 de Mayo
Monterrey, Nuevo León, C.P. 64000
MÉXICO

E-Mail: gobernador@nl.gob.mx
Fax: **(011 52 81) 2020 1226 (if someone answers say "me da tono de fax por favor")**
Salutation: Señor Gobernador / Dear Governor

Attorney General of the state of Nuevo León

Lic. Luis Carlos Treviño Berchelmann
Procurador del Estado de Nuevo León
Av. Ocampo 470 Pte., 1er piso, Centro
Monterrey 64000, Nuevo León
MEXICO

Fax: **011 52 81 20 20 4094**
Email: ltrevino@nl.gob.mx
Salutation: Señor Procurador/Dear Attorney General

Minister of the Interior

Lic. Juan Camilo Mouriño Terrazo
Secretaría de Gobernación
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso
Col. Juárez, Del. Cuauhtémoc
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MEXICO

Fax: **011 52 55 5093 3414**
E-mail: secretario@segob.gob.mx
Salutation: Señor Secretario/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 1 July 2008.