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First UA: 47/24 Index: AMR 41/8075/2024 Mexico of May 21, 2024

MEXICO

STOP ILLEGAL SURVEILLANCE NOW!

In 2016, Mexican authorities illegally spied on human rights defenders Ana Lorena Delgadillo, Marcela Turati, and Mercedes Doretti. These activists were working with families of missing migrants in San Fernando, Tamaulipas. The Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime (FEMDO) targeted them through unauthorized investigations and surveillance. We urge Mexican authorities to stop any arbitrary and illegal investigation, targeted surveillance, and criminal action against them.

Write to the Attorney General of Mexico urging him to:

- Close any investigation against Ana Lorena Delgadillo, Marcela Turati and Mercedes Doretti that stems from their human rights work and to put an end to any form of surveillance on them.
- Open a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the authorities involved in their criminalization and unlawful surveillance.

Write to:

Attorney General of Mexico
Alejandro Gertz Manero
Dr. Velasco, Número 175
Colonia Doctores, Alcaldía Cuauhtémoc
06720 Mexico City
Mexico
Email: alejandrogertz@fgr.org.mx
X: @FGRMexico
Salutation: Dear Attorney General,

And copy:

His Excellency Carlos Manuel Joaquin Gonzalez
Ambassador
Embassy of the United Mexican States
45 O'Connor Street, Suites 1000, 1010 and 1030
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4
Tel: (613) 233-8988, -9272, -9917 / 613-795-1868 (24h) Fax: (613) 235-9123
Email: infocan@sre.gob.mx

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

San Fernando, a municipality in Tamaulipas, Mexico, is a transit point for migrants, asylum seekers, and victims of forced displacement heading to the United States. The area is notorious for the presence of criminal groups like the Zetas and the Gulf Cartel. In August 2010, the bodies of 72 migrants from Central and South America were found in an open field nearby. Mexican authorities revealed that the

Zetas cartel had kidnapped these migrants, holding them on a ranch. When the migrants refused to work for the cartel, they were brutally killed and left in the open.

In April 2011, the Mexican army discovered 196 bodies of various nationalities in 48 clandestine graves in the same area. An official investigation suggested these people were also victims of the Zetas cartel, in collusion with municipal police.

Ana Lorena Delgadillo, founder of the Foundation for Justice and the Democratic Rule of Law (FJEDD), legally represents the families affected by these massacres. Marcela Turati is a leading journalist who has extensively covered these events. Mercedes Doretti, an independent expert and founder of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, analyzed remains found in the clandestine graves. Despite their critical work, these women faced prosecution by the Attorney General's Office (SEIDO of the PGR).

As part of the investigation into the San Fernando massacres, authorities illegally investigated and placed Ana Lorena, Marcela, and Mercedes under surveillance. Their personal information, including phone records, was accessed without authorization.

The criminalization of these three defenders has a chilling effect, discouraging others from protecting human rights. Amnesty International's May 2024 report, "Persecuted: Criminalization of Women Human Rights Defenders in Mexico," documents how SEIDO staff diverted resources from investigating the "San Fernando graves" to target Ana Lorena, Marcela, and Mercedes. This action violated their rights to privacy, freedom of expression, non-discrimination, due process, and the right to defend human rights. The Mexican state's actions represent a severe breach of justice and human rights principles.

Please take action as soon as possible until July 16, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.