

via fax: 011 503 2243 7857/9930/9947 Sr. Mauricio Funes President of El Salvador	via fax: 011 503 2523 7171/2243 9390/7857 Rodolfo Delgado Attorney General's Organized Crime Unit, El Salvador
via fax: 011 503 2523 7171/2243 9390/7857 Romeo Benjamin Barahona Attorney General of El Salvador	

January 26, 2010

Dear Sirs:

We are seriously concerned for the safety of the **staff of Radio Victoria**, a community radio station in Cabañas Department. On December 23 an email death threat, sent to 16 Radio Victoria staff, said: "Well, we already sent two to the pit, the question is who will be the third..." On December 24, an email to eight of the 16 people who had received the previous threat stated, "we've already chosen the next one to die. . ." These threats followed the killings of two anti-mining activists in Cabañas department: Gustavo Marcelo Rivera in June (cf our letter of Aug 12, 2009) and Ramiro Rivera on December 20. On, December 26, Dora Alicia Sorto Recinos, another mining activist was murdered; her husband, José Santos Rodríguez, is the Cabañas Environment Committee spokesperson (cf our letter of Jan 3, 2010).

The day after the assassination of Dora Alicia Sorto Recinos, armed men on motorbikes were seen arriving at the home of the head of Radio Victoria's news team, Isabel Gámez. They left when they saw no one inside the house.

We believe that the threats described above are related to Radio Victoria's commitment to social and human rights reporting on corruption issues and anti-mining campaigns. In light of the acts of intimidation described above, **we strongly urge** that you:

- order a prompt, full and independent investigation into the threats against Radio Victoria staff as well as the recent killing of Ramiro Rivera and Dora Alicia Sorto Recinos, and bring those responsible to justice;
- ensure that full protection is provided to all Radio Victoria staff, members of the Cabañas Environment Committee and their relatives who have received threats, in accordance with their own wishes.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: La Fundacion de Estudios para la Aplicacion de Derecho, Human Rights Organization ~ via fax: 011-503-2236-1833
Robert I. Blau, Charge d'Affaires, US Embassy, El Salvador ~ via fax: 011-503-2501-2154
Francisco Altshui Fuentes, Charge d'Affaires, US Embassy, El Salvador ~ via fax: 202-232-3763 or 202-234-3834
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202-458-3650
Florentin Meléndez, El Salvador member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202-458-3992
Douglas Kraft, El Salvador Desk, US Dept. of State ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
Oscar Humberto Luna, Ombudsman for Defense of Human Rights ~ via fax: 011-503-2222-0655
US Senators Brown & Voinovich ~ via email
US Representatives Boccheri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Sutton, Wilson, Space ~ via email

UA223/09Update/ElSalvador

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