



# National Association of Women Lawyers®

*The voice of women in the law™*

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October 4, 2006

MDP Patricia Gonzales Rodriguez  
Chihuahua State Public Prosecutor

C. Vincente Guerrero #616  
Co. Centro C.P. 31000

Chihuahua, Mexico

President Vincent Fox Quesada  
Residencia Oficial de "Los  
Pinos"  
Co. San Miguel Chapultepec  
C.P. 11850 Mexico D.F.  
Mexico

Re: Murders and Abductions in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua City

Honorable President Fox and Prosecutor Gonzales Rodriguez:

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Association of Women Lawyers, a preeminent association of women lawyers in the United States. We advocate for women's rights domestically and internationally. For several years now we have received reports of murders and abductions of women in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua City. As you are well aware, over the past years more than 400 women have been murdered there, yet most of these cases remain unresolved. A recent report by special prosecutor Maria Lopez Urbina on the investigation of these cases identified 177 public servants involved in the investigations who were found to have acted negligently. Shortly after the publication of her report, the Special Prosecutor was dismissed and her position was terminated. There appear to be no indications that any of these officials have been prosecuted, even in cases of criminal neglect.

The murders continue. In July of this year, for example, Elsa Torres died a tragic death after being doused in gasoline and set aflame. The case of Minerva Torres, who died 6 years ago, is a stark example of investigative misconduct in which the prosecutorial delay went so far as to withhold, for two years, information from the victim's parents that her body had been recovered. The obstruction of justice which allows these killings to go unpunished enables the murderers of these women and must thus be stopped. The UN's CEDAW committee made findings that Mexican officials have tolerated these crimes with indifference. Why, for example, has prosecutor Jesus Jose Solis not been prosecuted for obstruction of

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justice? By tolerating these crimes against women, Mexico is in violation of her duties under the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

We respectfully request that both the state and federal governments take all necessary steps to promptly prosecute these gender-based crimes and that individuals who obstruct justice in the investigation of these crimes be prosecuted without delay.

Most respectfully your,



Eva Herzer

Co-Chair, International Law Committee