



ROBERTA COOPER RAMO
President

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
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President Ernesto Zedillo-Ponce-de-León
Palacio Nacional
Patio de Honor
2° Piso
06067 México, D.F.
México

Dear Mr. President:

The American Bar Association and its more than 345,000 member lawyers have a strong commitment to the preservation of the rule of law in the international community. "Specifically, we affirm our support for an independent legal profession and judiciary, free from governmental interference, which will maintain internationally recognized standards of fairness and justice." These principles are embodied in a "Rule of Law Resolution" adopted by the Association's House of Delegates in February 1975.

Pursuant to the aforementioned resolution, we want to express our deep concern regarding the safety of Dr. Maria Teresa Jardí, a human rights leader and lawyer, Dr. Julian Andrade Jardí (her son), and Héctor Gutiérrez Ugalde, Dr. Andrade's assistant at the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH). According to reports we have received, on April 4, 1996, Dr. Jardí received anonymous death threats via telephone at her home. Also, on March 27, 1996, Mr. Ugalde was reportedly abducted near Dr. Jardí's home in Coyoacán, Mexico City, by three unidentified men who forced him into a white automobile. These reports state that he was taken to an unidentified house on the outskirts of Mexico City. When he asked his abductors who they were and to show an arrest warrant, he was allegedly beaten in the head, kicked in the body, and threatened with death. He was also ordered to tell his employers, Dr. Julian Andrade Jardí and Dr. Teresa Jardí, that they would be killed for their work.

Reports also allege that on April 1 and 2, 1996, several unidentified men arrived at the Fondo para la Asistencia y el Desarrollo (FAPRODE), for which Dr. Teresa Jardí works, looking for her. FAPRODE was closed, and the men failed to identify themselves when requested to do so by neighbors.

If proven to be true, these allegations reflect a serious violation of the rule of law in Mexico. The independence of judges and lawyers is fundamental in maintaining the international standards of equal justice and due process.

We respectfully urge that the Mexican Government immediately take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of Dr. Jardí and family and friends. We also respectfully urge that your Government promptly investigate the aforementioned alleged incidents and, if verified, bring those responsible to justice.

Thank you for your consideration of these important matters. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cooper Ramo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roberta Cooper Ramo

cc: Warren Christopher, Secretary of State
Jesus Silva Herzog, Mexican Ambassador to the United States
J. Ross Harper, President, International Bar Association