

Lic. Marco Antonio Adame Castillo
Gobernador del Estado de Morelos
Palacio de Gobierno
1° Piso, Centro
Cuernavaca 62000
Estado de Morelos

MÉXICO

Dear Governor Castillo,

I am writing to express my deep concern at the situation faced by women survivors and victims of violence in Morelos, and to urge you to take all necessary steps to ensure the immediate implementation of the Law on Women's Access to a life Free from Violence in Morelos state.

As you will be aware, Amnesty International published a report in August 2008, "Women's struggle for safety and justice. Violence in the Family in Mexico" (AMR 41/021/2008) based on research by AI delegates in Morelos, Sonora, Chiapas and Oaxaca. Delegates carried out interviews with survivors of violence in the family and also spoke to lawyers, staff in women's shelters, and representatives of the women's movement and non-governmental organizations. AI researchers also consulted official documentation such as surveys and medical reports. The extensive research found that the rights of women who have suffered violence in the family are violated by their aggressors, but also, on many occasions, by the state authorities' failure to act.

Amnesty International is aware that Morelos state has passed the Law on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence and welcomes this as a positive advance to protect women from violence in the state jurisdiction. However if the law is to have real impact on women's lives, regulatory procedures must be introduced and implemented in consultation with civil society as a matter of priority.

I urge you to introduce regulatory procedures and ensure that concrete steps are taken to implement the law, in particular by:

- Ensuring mandatory registration of all complaints of violence against women
- Developing and implementing investigative procedures and training to ensure the effective collection and assessment of all evidence of violence against women
- Creating special police units to respond immediately to emergency calls reporting violence against women in the family and to enforce restraining orders
- Reviewing conciliation procedures to ensure women are not placed in increased danger or pressured to drop criminal prosecution and prohibit officials from asking victims to deliver summons letters to their aggressors
- Funding and extending the coverage of temporary shelters for women survivors of domestic violence

Access to justice and timely protection measures for women survivors and victims of violence and their children is a basic human right. A denial of justice and protection measures constitutes a human rights violation and an act of discrimination and violence.

Thank you for your attention on such an important issue,

Yours faithfully,