



#### **FOUNDERS:**

Betty Williams, Ireland - 1976  
Máiread Maguire, Ireland - 1976  
Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Guatemala - 1992  
Prof. Jody Williams, USA - 1997  
Dr. Shirin Ebadi, Iran - 2003  
Prof. Wangari Maathai, Kenya - 2004

united for peace with justice and equality

### **Nobel Peace Laureates: Justice for Human Rights Defender in Juarez, Mexico**

--Ottawa (January 17, 2011).

Six Nobel Peace Laureates—Rigobert Menchu, Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Mairead Maguire, Betty Williams and Wangari Maathai—today joined activists from around the world who are calling on the Mexican government to fully investigate the murder of Marisela Escobedo Ortiz and her daughter Rubi Marisol Frayre.

Escobedo Ortiz was killed on December 16 while protesting on the steps of the governor's office in the state capital, Chihuahua, demanding progress on her daughter's case. Rubi was killed in August 2008 by her boyfriend. Escobedo investigated her daughter's case on her own, and though the killer confessed, he has walked free.

The day after the murder of Escobedo, arsonists burned down the lumber business of Escobedo's partner, Jose Monge, and the asphyxiated body of Monge's brother was found dumped in a town near the U.S.-Mexico border on Sunday morning.

Suspected criminals are rarely successfully prosecuted in Ciudad Juarez, where more than 7,000 people have been killed in the past three years. In 2010, nearly 300 women were murdered in Ciudad Juarez, which is right across the border from El Paso, Texas.

Last year the Inter-American Human Right's Court ruled that Mexico is not preventing and duly investigating the violence against women in Ciudad Juarez—the disappearances, sexual violence, and murders of women as well as the aggression against family members and defenders who demand justice for these cases.

The Nobel Laureates—joined by activists protesting today at Mexican Embassies around the world—are calling for Mexico to comply with the ruling of the Inter-American Human Right's Court.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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**Nobel Women's Initiative**  
**613-276-9030 or 613-569-8400, ext. 113**

## Statement to condemn the assassination of a women's human rights defender in Ciudad Juarez

As women Nobel Peace Laureates, we are gravely concerned about the murder of human rights defender Marisela Escobedo Ortiz last 16 December 2010, while she protested the continued impunity in the homicide of her daughter Rubi Marisol Frayre Escobedo.

Rubi's boyfriend murdered the 16-year-old in August 2008. As demonstrated by numerous national and international reports, the authorities acted in the same manner as they have acted in the last 17 years in reaction to the murder of women: they did not investigate nor punish the assassin, even though her mother provided all proof and even presented the confessed assassin.

We are particularly concerned that Marisela Ortiz Escobedo's murder took place as we reach the one-year anniversary of the Inter-American Human Rights Court's judgment against the Mexican State for not preventing and duly investigating the violence against women in Ciudad Juarez - the disappearances, sexual violence, and murders of women as well as the aggression against family members and defenders who demand justice for these cases.

As the Inter-American Court points out in its sentence, Mexico has maintained its discriminatory culture and policies against women, which are the primary cause of femicide and subsequent impunity. Between 1993 and 2001, the years analyzed in the *Campo Algodonero* judgment, there were 214 registered cases of women murdered in Ciudad Juarez. The journalistic register from 1 January to 15 December 2010 shows 297 women murdered in that same city—an alarming increase. Almost all of the cases go unresolved. Mexican authorities have not initiated the effective implementation of the provisions in the Inter-American Court's judgment, as evidenced by these unfortunate events.

We know that this is not an isolated case, and that the violence against the human rights defenders who bravely fight against femicide in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua is a constant issue in Mexico.

We are alarmed that the demands for justice and the denouncing of gender discrimination threaten the integrity and life of the victims' families and human rights defenders in Mexico. We know that Marisela Ortiz Escobedo's family continues to live in imminent danger.

We call on the government of Mexico to take action, without delay, to ensure justice, effectively comply with the *Campo Algodonero* judgment, and prevent any attacks on the families of the victims and human rights defenders.

Betty Williams



Mairead Maguire



Wangari

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