

BEATEN, KICKED AND GIVEN ELECTRIC SHOCKS



CLAUDIA MEDINA TAMARIZ

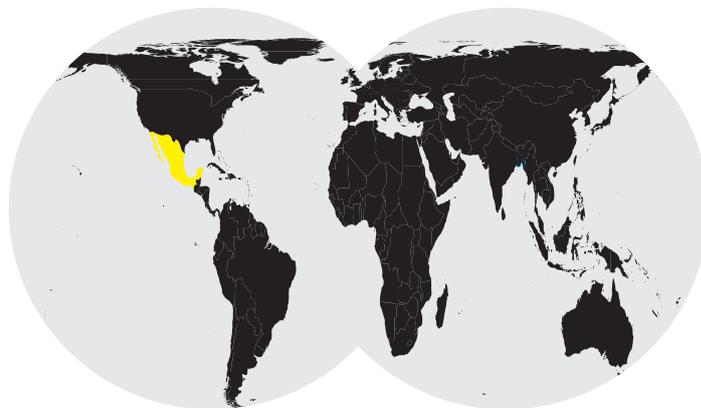
Mexico

Claudia Medina Tamariz woke at 3am on 7 August 2012, to find marines had broken into her home in Veracruz City. They tied her hands, blindfolded her and took her to the local naval base where, she says, she was given electric shocks, beaten and kicked. She was wrapped in plastic to disguise the marks from the beating. Claudia, a mother of three, was accused of being a member of a violent criminal gang. She denies it.

The day after her arrest, she was blindfolded again and taken with a group of other detainees to the Federal Attorney General's Office. When the blindfold was removed, she realised her husband and brother-in-law had also been arrested. A prosecutor interrogated Claudia and a marine pressured her into signing a statement that she wasn't allowed to read.

In court, on 13 August 2012, she retracted her statement and described the abuse inflicted on her in detention. All the charges against her except one (carrying an illegal weapon) were dropped, and she was released on bail.

A judge ordered the Federal Attorney General's Office to investigate her allegations. But to date no specialist medical and psychological assessment has been conducted, even though Mexico is obliged to do this under UN guidelines for investigating torture (the Istanbul Protocol), nor has anyone been held to account for Claudia's torture.



COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Torture and ill-treatment are used routinely by Mexican police and security forces. Reports of torture increased alarmingly between 2006 and 2012, when the government adopted a military approach to tackling organised crime.

Between 2010 and 2013, 7,164 complaints of torture and other ill-treatment were registered with the National Human Rights Commission but the federal judiciary recorded only seven convictions. Complaints are rarely investigated adequately. As a result, perpetrators go unpunished and statements obtained under torture are accepted as evidence.

Mexico has ratified the UN Convention against Torture and its constitution prohibits torture, and yet it remains rife.

TAKE ACTION

Amnesty International is calling on the Federal Attorney General to:

- Investigate the alleged torture and ill-treatment suffered by Claudia Medina Tamariz.
- Make the results public.
- Bring those responsible to justice.

Please write to:

Federal Attorney General Jesús Murillo Karam
Procuraduría General de la República
Av. Paseo de la Reforma 211-213
Col. Cuauhtémoc C.P. 06500
Mexico D.F.
MEXICO

SAMPLE LETTER

This is an example of what you could write. Please include the three bullet points below in your own letter.

Dear Federal Attorney General,

At 3am on 7 August 2012, marines broke into the home of Claudia Medina Tamariz in Veracruz City. She was taken to a local naval base, where she says she was beaten, kicked and given electric shocks.

Claudia Medina Tamariz was accused of being a member of a violent criminal gang and forced to sign a statement that she was not allowed to read. In court she retracted this statement and described the abuse she suffered in detention. All charges were dropped except one: carrying an illegal weapon. A judge has ordered the Federal Attorney General's Office to investigate the allegations, but to date no one has been held to account.

I urge you to:

- Open an effective investigation into the alleged torture and ill-treatment suffered by Claudia Medina Tamariz, make its results public and bring those responsible to justice.
- Ensure that full and impartial medical examinations are performed on Claudia Medina Tamariz, to the standards Mexico has committed to under the Istanbul Protocol.
- Ensure the Istanbul Protocol is established as the benchmark procedure for investigating allegations of torture and ill-treatment in Mexico.

SOLIDARITY WITH CLAUDIA

A solidarity message takes only a few minutes to write, but you can make a big difference to Claudia. Please let her know you are thinking of her and support her struggle for justice.

Address: Claudia Medina Tamariz
Centro de Derechos Humanos
'Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez'
Serapio Rendón 57-B
Colonia San Rafael
Delegación Cuauhtémoc 06470
Mexico D.F.
MEXICO

Preferred language: Spanish

Suggested message:

Dear Claudia, I am concerned about your situation and support you in your fight for justice. With affection and admiration.

(In Spanish: 'Estimada Claudia, Te envío mi solidaridad por la difícil situación que has tenido que vivir desde 2012. Quiero que sepas que estoy contigo y que te apoyo en la lucha que has decidido emprender. Con afecto y admiración.)

Can I send a religious card? No

Can I mention Amnesty? Yes

Can I include a return address? Yes

Amnesty International has campaigned against torture for over half a century. Thirty years ago we helped to secure an historic global ban.

But the governments that signed up to it have failed to live up to their promises. They still use torture to obtain 'confessions', to silence opposition – or simply to punish.

Everybody in the world has the right to live free from torture.

To find out more about this case:

www.amnesty.org.uk/stoptorture