

# MÉXICO

In June 2004, two EAAF members traveled to Ciudad Juárez, state of Chihuahua, México, at the request of the Washington Office of Latin America (WOLA), the Mexican Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Mexican Special Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against the Women of Ciudad Juárez, and *Justicia para Nuestras Hijas*. Their objective was to produce an assessment of the situation of unidentified remains of murdered women in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua, and to meet with local NGO's, families, and officials involved in the investigation of the murders and disappearances. EAAF continued its work in México in subsequent trips in October 2004 and in January 2005.

## BACKGROUND

Since early 1993, several hundred young women have disappeared and been found dead in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, a city separated from El Paso, Texas, by a muddy stretch of the Río Grande. In many cases, their bodies reportedly showed signs of sexual abuse and mutilation. According to a report by the governmental entity, the National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH), approximately 263 women were murdered between 1993 and 2003.<sup>1</sup> The same year, Amnesty International (AI) claimed that there had been at least 370 such cases. AI reported that from January to June 2005, 18 young women have been murdered in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua City, bringing the total to almost 400 by their count.<sup>2</sup> A report released in January 2005 by the United



Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stresses the difficulty in assessing the number of women who have disappeared: "It is almost impossible even to guess how many women have actually disappeared in Ciudad Juárez during the past decade."<sup>3</sup> According to the Special Federal Prosecutor for Women murdered in Ciudad Juárez, by October 25, 2004, 33 women remained disappeared;<sup>4</sup> the Public Security Program reported 34 women disappeared as of August 19, 2005.<sup>5</sup>

Many of the victims worked in assembly plants and disappeared after leaving work. Others were students and workers in informal commerce. After having been missing for days, their bodies were usually discovered in vacant lots.<sup>6</sup> Most of them were young and poor.



**(Left)** A cross placed for Marcela Viviana Rayas, who disappeared in March 2003 from Chihuahua City. **(Right)** A cross placed for Neyra Azucena Cervantes who disappeared in May 2003 and whose remains have not yet been identified. *Photos courtesy of the Washington Office on Latin America.*

For most of the last century, Ciudad Juárez was a small border town whose economy depended upon commercial traffic to and from the United States. During Prohibition in the US in the early 1900s, it became a minor tourist destination. In the 1960s, however, Juárez was gradually transformed into a factory city, as México shifted from Import-Substitution Industrialization to economic strategies based on exports. By the 1980s, towns along the border were changing dramatically as new agreements encouraged companies to open *maquiladoras* there. *Maquiladoras* — assembly plants that pair México's lower wages with proximity to the border — typically re-export finished merchandise back to the US.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, *maquiladora* zones attracted increasing numbers of migrants from impoverished regions of México, and at the beginning most of the *maquiladoras* were hiring only women.<sup>8</sup> The El Paso/Ciudad Juárez area led the border region in population growth, leaping from

a population of under a million in the 1980s to nearly two million in the 2000 census. The industry peaked in the years following the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. By the end of the 1990s, however, some companies began relocating to Asian countries, particularly China.<sup>9</sup>

Juárez has also been the base of the Juárez drug trafficking cartel, reportedly connected with the Colombian cartels, exceptionally placed to transport drugs to the US — one of the world's largest consumer markets. This and other factors resulted in the proliferation of small drug houses (*"picaderos"*) in Ciudad Juárez itself. There are also reports of strong connections between the cartels, former local police members and other officials.<sup>10</sup>

Also, for decades Ciudad Juárez has been a center for night life, with thousands of people crossing from the US every weekend, returning the next day or the same night.

## Climate of Impunity and Efforts to Demand Justice

Most of the murders in Ciudad Juárez remain unsolved. Officials, NGOs, journalists, and others have placed responsibility on various individuals or groups. These have included a single serial killer or multiple "copycat" killers from Juárez or the US, a network of bus drivers employed by the *maquiladoras*, narco-traffickers, a satanic cult, a ring of organ traffickers, and socially protected members of the local elite.

Though police have made high-profile arrests, the grounds for the arrests have been contested in many cases. In October 1995, state judicial police arrested Abdel Latif Sharif, an Egyptian-born chemist with a background of sexual assault charges in the United States. Local police declared the serial killing resolved. In December of that year, however, another young woman was found dead, and in 1996 the official annual total increased to forty-three. Sharif was later convicted, and remains in prison, though he insists that he is a scapegoat. In 1996, ten members of a youth gang were accused of committing additional murders on Sharif's behalf. Six of the



Map illustrating Ciudad Juárez's proximity to the United States.

young men later retracted confessions signed in custody, stating that they had been tortured. In 1999 and 2001, two groups of bus drivers known as "*los choferes*" were detained on similar charges.

In another high profile case in 2001, one of the bus drivers detained in 1999, Victor García Uribe, was allegedly arrested, taken to a private home, and tortured by police until he confessed to murdering — along with Gustavo Gonzalez Meza — eight women who had been found in a cotton field on November 6, 2001.<sup>11</sup> His lawyer and his wife began publicly denouncing the illegal detention, and the chief forensic expert for the state of Chihuahua resigned, claiming he had been urged to fabricate evidence.<sup>12</sup> In 2002, Gonzalez Meza's lawyer was shot to death by the police, who claimed that he was misidentified as a fleeing felon.<sup>13</sup> Gustavo González Meza was reportedly found dead in his jail cell after being taken to a prison medical facility the day before for a hernia operation in 2003. Human rights organizations are demanding an investigation of the circumstances of Gonzalez Meza's death. According to the Latin America Working Group Education Fund, Uribe was

later released for lack of evidence after being sentenced to fifty years in prison for the eight murders.<sup>14</sup>

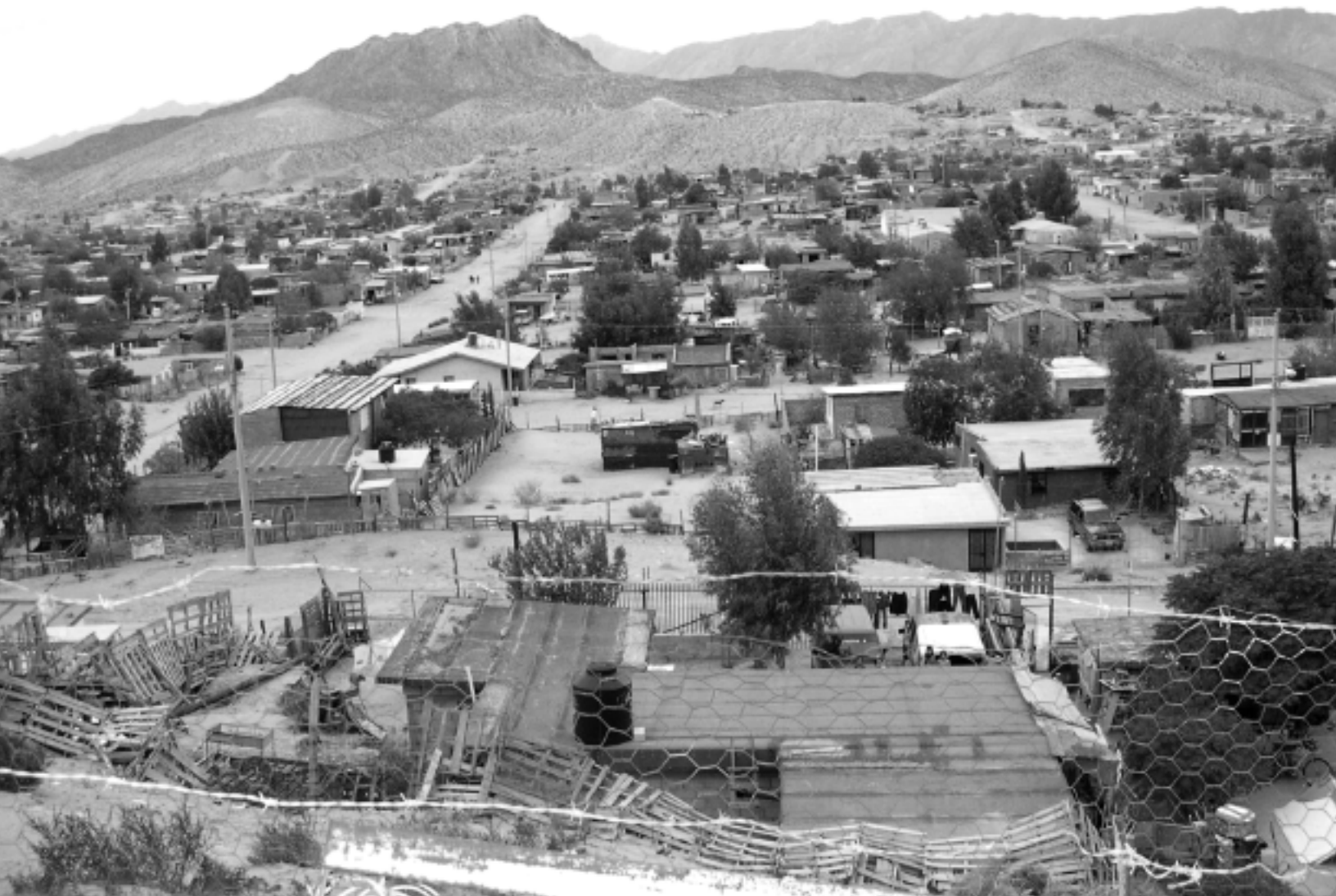
In 2003, US citizen Cynthia Kiecker and her husband, Ulises Perzabal, were arrested for the murder of 16-year old Marcela Viviana Rayas. Kiecker, and nearly all of the others who have been accused of these crimes, claim to have been tortured into confessions by police.<sup>15</sup> Kiecker and Perzabal were released in December 2005, after two years in prison. In an unusual move, the families of victims and the families of the accused have joined together to protest the judicial process related to these cases.<sup>16</sup>

Local NGOs and human rights groups have stressed that these crimes have occurred within a broad context of insecurity and increasing vulnerability of poor women in Ciudad Juárez. The

transience of border communities implies that daily life is full of contact with strangers. The lack of due diligence shown by the authorities and the insecurity prevailing in Ciudad Juárez and around the *maquilas* where most of the women work have also contributed to the climate of impunity in the region.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the rate of violent death among young men, compared to national averages and rates in the rest of the border region, is also very high in Juárez.<sup>18</sup> These high rates are often associated with the shift of northbound drug trafficking routes from the west coast to the interior in the early 1990s. Noting the high rate of unemployment among men in the region, many observers have pointed out that the explicit preference for female labor in the *maquiladoras* aggravated tensions in already-strained migrant families. Esther Chávez Cano of the domestic violence center *Casa Amiga* argues that the killings are part of a "patriarchal backlash."<sup>19</sup> Others argue that efforts to attribute responsibility to social circumstances in the area miss the point; rather, the investigation should remain focused on finding the perpetrators and bringing them to justice.<sup>20</sup>





**View of Colonia Anapra, an extremely poor neighborhood on the outskirts of Ciudad Juárez where many of the bodies were found. Photo courtesy of the Washington Office on Latin America.**

During the mid-1990s, groups formed in Juárez, including associations of families of victims, journalists, and students to press officials for investigations and to document and draw attention to the killings. In 1998, the CNDH statements on the murders made national headlines. Their independent investigation concluded that city and state officials were guilty of neglect and dereliction of duty.<sup>21</sup> Amnesty International echoes this criticism, writing that with the exception of the CNDH report, during the first decade, the killings were treated as ordinary criminal offenses “committed within the private domain, without recognizing the existence of a pattern of violence against women.”<sup>22</sup> This was one reason that human rights organizations have linked the murders to a broad pattern of gender discrimination, including systematic discrimination by the legal system.

Pressure mounted for a federal intervention in the crimes, which fell within the jurisdiction of the State of Chihuahua as long as they were addressed as individual criminal acts. In 1999, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, Asma Jahangir,<sup>23</sup> wrote, “many of the crimes were deliberately never investigated for the sole reason that the victims were ‘only’ young girls...and were therefore regarded as expendable.”<sup>24</sup> Following the release of Jahangir’s report, international pressure to investigate these killings increased.

Despite objections to Jahangir’s report, in 2000 President Ernesto Zedillo signed a memorandum of intentions — not only to address the Juárez murders but to design a broad federal human rights policy — with UN High Commissioner on Human Rights,



Pink crosses representing the victims found at Campo Algodonero. Photo by EAAF.

Mary Robinson. Zedillo's successor, President Vicente Fox, followed by signing a Technical Cooperation Package with the UN one day after entering office in December 2000. México's collaboration with the UN addressed five themes: National Human Rights Initiatives; Indigenous Rights; Administration of Justice; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and Vulnerable Groups, particularly children and migrant laborers.<sup>25</sup>

While these efforts were underway, a pattern of killings similar to those in Ciudad Juárez emerged in Chihuahua City (though in lesser numbers), the capital of the state, and the number of deaths in Ciudad Juárez continued to climb. According to Amnesty International, 51 new cases of murder were reported in 2001, and 43 cases were reported in 2002, including those reported in Chihuahua City.

In 2002, a coalition of human rights groups led by the Mexico City-based Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH)

brought a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), part of the Organization of American States (OAS).<sup>26</sup> The petition, signed by hundreds of organizations and individuals, lodged a complaint regarding both the murders and the lack of adequate response by the government, and requested OAS intervention. The IACHR Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women, Marta Altolaguirre, visited Ciudad Juárez and Mexico City in February 2002, meeting with governmental officials and ex-officials as well as representatives of a wide range of non-governmental organizations. In March 2003, the Commission published its report and recommendations. *The Situation of the Rights of Women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: The Right to be Free from Violence and Discrimination* emphasized the importance of prosecutions, asserting: "the State has the obligation to use all the legal means at its disposal to combat impunity, because it fosters chronic recidivism."<sup>27</sup> The report also recommended ways of increasing "due diligence" in the investigation, prosecution, and prevention of violence against women, including



reopening “cold” cases to resolve them and to identify unacknowledged patterns among the cases, including systematic institutional deficiencies.<sup>28</sup>

In early 2003, echoing the IACHR report, President Fox created a federal commission to coordinate and oversee relevant programs. In July, Interior Secretary Santiago Creel unveiled a “Forty-Point Plan” for monitoring and addressing factors related to the violence, such as public security, women’s legal rights, and education. In October, Secretary Santiago Creel appointed Guadalupe Morfín to coordinate the “Forty-Point Plan” and in February 2004 Fox appointed her to head the Special Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against the Women of Ciudad Juárez.

Received optimistically by the human rights community for her previous work in this area, Morfín’s mandate is to coordinate the many programs in the Plan consisting mainly of preventive measures, such as constructing shelters for battered women, developing public education campaigns, and offering aid to the families of victims. The mandate also included an evaluation of the original forty points to offer recommendations on the strategy itself, and to promote some actions before the corresponding authorities to bring justice to the victims and their families, without the authority to conduct investigations.

Later on, the Federal Attorney General (PGR, or *Procuraduría General de la República*) announced the formation of a second key agency: the *Fiscalía Mixta*. This is a new joint investigative and prosecuting body, composed of both the state and federal-level attorney general’s offices. In January 2004, Fox appointed María López Urbina as Special Federal Prosecutor for the crimes, a new position within the PGR. She was charged with reviewing files from the Chihuahua Attorney General’s Office to detect discrepancies in past investigations and to determine exactly which can be taken over by the federal-level PGR.<sup>29</sup>

In October 2003 the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) visited Ciudad Juárez, and in April 2004, in New York, urged the Mexican government to seek the assistance of institutional counterparts in the US.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile, the US public and international human rights communities were increasingly focused on the issue, due to press articles, the release of a film, *Señorita Extraviada*,<sup>31</sup> and increasingly well-publicized demonstrations in the border region and beyond.<sup>32</sup>

Morfín Otero and López Urbina formally presented separate reports to President Fox (Urbina in June 2004, October 2004 and January 2005 and Morfín in June 2004 and August 2005). At a public event on June 3, 2004, Fox announced that the government would dedicate \$1.4 million to the investigation of the crimes. In her report, Morfín supported all forty points and recommended several new projects, including conducting independent forensic investigations, creating a program to “professionalize” the police, and making several changes to Chihuahua state law.<sup>33</sup> Morfín also condemned the failure of authorities from Chihuahua to protect the rights of women, citing in particular officials’ lack of response to missing person complaints and potential leads on cases since 1993.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, she stated that beginning with the administration of Governor Patricio Martínez (1998-2004), officials began harassing families of victims and their advocates, and fabricating evidence against scapegoats who were coerced into signing confessions. The federal government also had abandoned its responsibility to combat organized crime, according to the report.<sup>35</sup>

At the same event, Special Prosecutor López Urbina of the *Fiscalía Mixta* presented a preliminary report on her work to review state judicial files related to these cases. At that time, she had received 271 files from the State of Chihuahua Attorney General’s Office, from a total of 307 officially-recognized cases of female homicide. Of these, she had reviewed fifty cases, 29 of which were still under investigation. According to the report, “there was notorious inactivity and negligence...that led to the loss of evidence and the inadequate protection of crime scenes. The forensic results were riddled with grave problems of validity and trustworthiness.”<sup>36</sup> She also stated that of the 167 civil servants involved in these 29 cases, 81 are under suspicion of administrative and criminal offenses. The prosecution of these officials falls under the jurisdiction of the State of Chihuahua.



**EAAF members Patricia Bernardi (left) and Mercedes Doretti (right) analyze documents before taking samples from the unidentified remains in Chihuahua, state of Chihuahua on August 3, 2005. Photo courtesy of Christ Chavez.**

Following requests from local and international human rights organizations, On March 9, 2005, US Representative Hilda Solís of California and Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico reintroduced resolutions in the US Congress condemning the violence in Ciudad Juárez.<sup>37</sup>

## EAAF's Participation

In January 2004, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) contacted EAAF about the possibility of providing technical assistance on some of the cases. From that point on, EAAF corresponded with the nongovernmental Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights and later with *Justicia para Nuestras Hijos*, and Morfín's office.

In her 2003 report, *The Situation of the Rights of Women in Ciudad Juárez*, OAS Special Rapporteur Marta

Altolaguirre recommended evaluating past investigations by analyzing the documentation left.<sup>38</sup> In compliance with these recommendations, the Special Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against the Women of Ciudad Juárez, under the direction of Guadalupe Morfín at the request of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH), asked the Judicial authorities of the State of Chihuahua for access to some of those files. In 2004, Morfín's office came to an agreement with Chihuahua State Attorney's Office (PGJE, or *Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado*). The PGJE would grant investigators limited access to the judicial files of women who were found dead between 1993 and 2003, whose deaths were classified as homicide, and whose remains were unidentified, or whose identifications were in doubt.

In order to understand how to assist in these cases, EAAF first wanted to assess the dimension of the problem of unidentified women both in Ciudad Juárez

and Chihuahua City, including what has been done in terms of forensic procedures and analysis and the current accessibility and whereabouts of these remains.

From May 31 to June 12, 2004, two EAAF members traveled to Ciudad Juárez, along with EAAF consultant Dr. Maria Cristina de Mendonça, a forensic pathologist from the National Legal-Medical Institute of Portugal. Their task was to analyze forensic and other procedural aspects of these investigations based on an analysis of available documentation, comprised of mostly judicial files.

During that visit, EAAF was allowed to view 24 files at the offices of the *Fiscalía Mixta*, the Joint Federal/State Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of General de Justicia del Estado (PGJE) and state officials. Though the files could not be copied or photographed, the three forensic specialists were able to draw conclusions about patterns in past investigations based on careful reading and observation of the photographs contained within the files.

Accompanied by representatives of the CMDPDH and professionals from the offices of Morfín and *Justicia para Nuestras Hijas*, they also met with Federal and State Judicial authorities, the State Medical Examiners office (*Servicio Médico Forense*, or SEMEFO) for the cities of Juárez and Chihuahua, local and international human rights groups, and families of the victims.

In 2004, EAAF conducted a study of 24 judicial files and other investigative work at the request of the Mexican Commission for Defense and Protection of Human Rights, *Justicia para Nuestras Hijas* and the Commission to Eradicate and Prevent Violence against Women in the City of Juárez ("Juarez Commission").<sup>39</sup> EAAF also held meetings with investigative bodies and met with relatives of the victims. The goals of the mission were to find out whether forensic work could make a contribution to these cases, to establish the minimum number of unidentified women in Ciudad Juárez and to determine the current location of the remains. EAAF also reviewed three cases where the families of the victims had doubts about the identity and/or the cause of death.

The key findings of this assessment were that the minimum number of unidentified remains in the City of Juárez corresponds to 53 female individuals, (since the assesment the number has risen to 58 female individuals). EAAF observed significant uncertainty about the exact location of the remains of the unidentified individuals, although officials and some documentation indicated that half of them could be at the Medical Examiners Office in Ciudad Juárez and the other half could be in mass graves at local municipal cemeteries.

EAAF also observed grave methodological and diagnostic problems in all phases of the forensic work (recovery and analysis) of the unidentified remains, and technical and/or credibility problems on the results of the genetic analysis.

The recovery of evidence at the crime scenes lacked, in many cases, a basic inventory of findings and did not comply with basic chain of custody procedures. This is coupled with the fact that in many of the files the pages were not officially numbered, making the removal or incorporation of papers or evidence impossible to trace.

The absence of a correctly estimated biological profile (estimation of age at the time of death, height and ancestry), traumatic profile (ante-mortem, peri-mortem and post-mortem lesions) and time of death of the recovered remains directly hinders the ability to identify the remains. Databases created using current biological profiles and data inevitably will produce wrong inclusions and exclusions when trying to identify remains. The multiplicity of state, federal and international DNA laboratories intervening and DNA analysis results unfortunately did not help to clarify these issues, creating justifiable doubts among many relatives of the victims about a method that in most situations offers a high degree of certainty. EAAF also observed serious diagnostic problems affecting the certainty of the cause and manner of death.

EAAF pointed out the need to centralize all information about these cases, and the need to analyze each of them individually and together, trying to find patterns between them and maximizing identification efforts. EAAF's assessment of serious forensic



problems existing in the investigation of these cases is more detailed and larger but it is consistent with previous findings from local and international, governmental, intergovernmental and NGO agencies.

Because of this, and in light of the political sensitivity of these cases, EAAF recommended the creation of a multi-disciplinary, independent investigation team to review these cases and try to recover and identify the unidentified remains. In October 2004, EAAF presented this diagnostic report to Guadalupe Morfín, Mexican Commission for Defense and Protection of Human Rights, and *Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa*. In January 2005, the team presented an expanded version to a broader audience that included members of the state-level judiciary, state legislative groups working on “feminicide,” organizations of families of victims, and NGOs working on the issue in Ciudad Juárez, and Chihuahua. Also, in Mexico City, EAAF gave presentations to the special groups on “feminicide” at the Federal Parliament and to the Ministry of the Interior.

Taking into account all the information received during these three trips, EAAF developed a six month plan that included the analysis of all the remains in existence at the Medical Examiners Office in Ciudad Juárez and in Chihuahua city, and the search and exhumation of all other remains that could be retrieved from mass graves present in two municipal cemeteries in Ciudad Juárez. The plan also included the exhumation and analysis of the remains of approximately 10 women where the families have expressed doubts about the identity and/or the cause of death of their daughters. DNA samples from the remains and from the families of the disappeared would be taken and analyzed at a laboratory in the United States with extensive experience in genetic analysis from bone samples — a more complicated and more expensive procedure than the one conducted on soft tissue samples. The plan includes working with Mexican independent forensic experts and providing recommendations to the Attorney General’s office.

## 2005 Update

State elections occurred in November 2004. Under a new governor and state attorney general, an agreement was signed between the Attorney General’s office and EAAF.

EAAF completed Phase I of the investigation plan between June 18 and August 12, 2005. EAAF team members analyzed the remains of 29 female individuals at the SEMEFO from Ciudad Juárez and 10 female individuals from the C4 (Medical Examiners Office) of Chihuahua City. In each case, EAAF first analyzed initial inventories of what was originally recovered at

the crime scene at the time of the discovery, in terms of the remains and associated evidence and what is currently in existence. The team also analyzed all forensic analysis conducted on the victims (with the exception of some documents, particularly previous results of DNA

analysis that were not provided by the officials or were not available). Based on this information, EAAF produced its own assessment of the data for identification purposes, cause and manner of death, and took samples for DNA analysis from each of the remains both in Ciudad Juárez and in Chihuahua.

In addition, EAAF members interviewed 62 relatives of victims (2 or 3 members of each family), requesting background of each case, ante-mortem information (physical information about their loved one when she was alive) and taking blood and saliva DNA samples from them.

Finally, EAAF conducted research to try to locate the remains of 24 female victims that were sent to mass graves in two local municipal cemeteries between 1993 and 1998 in Ciudad Juárez. In order to locate the remains, EAAF collected data from the entrance and exit records of the morgue in Ciudad Juárez, the sanitation department, the death certificates from the registration office, two funeral homes operating with the SEMEFO, and records of the San Rafael and La Colina municipal cemeteries. EAAF also interviewed officials from these

“The forensic results were riddled with grave problems of validity and trustworthiness.”

– former Federal Special Prosecutor  
López Urbina

offices to determine the location of these remains. EAAF was able to locate the remains of the 24 female victims, 11 in La Colina and 13 in San Rafaela. They are buried in 6 and 10 mass graves respectively with other individuals. In order to recover these 24 individuals, EAAF will have to exhume a total of 53 individuals.

Phase II of the project is planned for October and November, 2005. More information on EAAF's work in México will be available in EAAF's 2006 Annual report.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Informe especial sobre los Casos de Homicidios y Desapariciones de Mujeres en el Municipio de Juárez, Chihuahua." A government report can be read in Spanish at [www.cndh.org.mx/lacndh/informes/espec/juarez2003/index.htm](http://www.cndh.org.mx/lacndh/informes/espec/juarez2003/index.htm).
2. "Mexico," Annual Report 2005. Amnesty International. [www.amnestyusa.org/countries/mexico/document.do?id=ar&yr=2005](http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/mexico/document.do?id=ar&yr=2005).
3. "Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." United Nations Report. CEDAW/C/200/OP.8 Mexico, 27/1/05 paragraph 73. [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw32/CEDAW-C-2005-OP.8-MEXICO-E.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw32/CEDAW-C-2005-OP.8-MEXICO-E.pdf).
4. (January 2005 report, [http://www.pgr.gob.mx/inf\\_labores/Comparecencia\\_Senadores\\_Cd\\_Juarez/Informe\\_Vi\\_2003.htm](http://www.pgr.gob.mx/inf_labores/Comparecencia_Senadores_Cd_Juarez/Informe_Vi_2003.htm))
5. <http://mujeresdesaparecidascdjuarez.gob.mx>
6. *Ibid.*, paragraph 37.
7. An online resource on the zone's legal, economic, and demographic transformation is "Welcome to El Paso/Juárez," the project of economists and urban planners at the University of Michigan: <http://www.elpaso.org/>
8. Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, Special Report, *The Situation of the Rights of Women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: the Right to Be Free from Violence and Discrimination*, March 2003.
9. The Federal Reserve Bank reports that employment in *maquiladoras* declined by 21% between 2000 and 2002. US Federal Reserve data available in the online article "Have Mexico's Maquiladoras Bottomed Out?" at [www.dallasfed.org/research/swel/2004/swel0401c.html](http://www.dallasfed.org/research/swel/2004/swel0401c.html).
10. For one recent example of this collaboration between security forces and drug cartel, see New York Times, Friday September 30, 2005, page "Mexico Fears its drug trafficking get help from Guatemalans", by Ginger Thompson. See also data on the so-called "narcofosas."
11. Latin America Working Group Education Fund, "Scapegoats of Juarez: The Misuse of Justice in Prosecuting Women's Murders in Chihuahua, Mexico," September 2005.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Guillermprieto, Alma. "A Hundred Women: Why has a decade-long string of murders gone unsolved?" *The New Yorker*, September 29, 2003.
16. See Laurie Freeman, "Still Waiting for Justice: Shortcomings in Mexico's Effort to End Impunity for Murders of Girls and Women in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua," Washington Office on Latin America, March 2005. [http://www.wola.org/Mexico/hr/ciudad\\_juarez/still\\_waiting\\_for\\_justice.pdf](http://www.wola.org/Mexico/hr/ciudad_juarez/still_waiting_for_justice.pdf)
17. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Thirty-second session; 10-28 January 2005; Report on Mexico produced by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, and reply from the Government of Mexico.
18. The Latin American Working Group, drawing on Mexican and US governmental sources, has compiled comparative homicide statistics for the border cities, by sex and age group. The 1995-97 rate for women 15-24 years of age was 12.4 per 100,000 in Ciudad Juárez, 1.1 per 100,000 in El Paso, and 3.6 per 100,000 in Tijuana. Men in the same age group were killed at a rate of 83.7 per 100,000 in Ciudad Juárez. [www.lawg.org/countries/Mexico/juarez-murder-rates.htm](http://www.lawg.org/countries/Mexico/juarez-murder-rates.htm).
19. Dillon, Sam. "Rape and Murder Stalk Women in North Mexico," *The New York Times*, April 18, 1998 and *Vértigo* magazine, México, DF, June 11, 2004.
20. El Paso Times reporter Diane Washington Valdez, who has written consistently on this issue for several years, has recently finished a book outlining the case for a relatively small group of responsible parties, and an official cover-up. *Harvest of Women: A Mexican Safari, or Cosecha de Mujeres* (published by Oceano). See also Columbia Journalism Review which offers a sketch and advance statements from the author. [www.cjr.org/issues/2004/2/burnett-mexico.asp](http://www.cjr.org/issues/2004/2/burnett-mexico.asp).
21. CNDH Recommendation 44/98 was condemned by Chihuahuan political figures.
22. Intolerable Killings: Ten Years of Abductions and Murders of Women., "Amnesty International p.7. <http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/document.do?id=1829EE5E27AF155F80256D75005CCB07>.
23. Jahangir was Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions, For additional context, please consult EAAF's 2001 Annual Report
24. Report of the UN Special Rapporteur, E/CN.4/2000/3/Add.3 paragraph 89. <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G99/161/43/PDF/G9916143.pdf?OpenElement>
25. EAAF participated in part of the Technical Cooperation Program. In 2001, the UNHCHR asked EAAF to write a protocol—a detailed practical guide for investigations involving human remains—for investigating deaths suspected of having been caused by human rights abuses.
26. The IACHR investigates denunciations from petitioners who claim that their grievances can not be resolved through national-level judiciaries. For more information on the InterAmerican System, please see EAAF's 1999 Annual report, and [www.cidh.org](http://www.cidh.org).
27. "The Situation of the Rights of Women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: The Right to be Free from Violence and Discrimination." OAS OEA/Ser.L/V/II.117 March 7, 2003. <http://www.cidh.oas.org/annualrep/2002eng/chap.vi.juarez.htm>
28. *Ibid.*
29. "Developments as of September 2003." Amnesty International. 08/11/03. AMR 41/026/2003. <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engamr410262003> Ordinary murders fall under the jurisdiction of the State of Chihuahua. Crimes can be "attracted" to the federal Prosecutor's Office (that is, removed from the jurisdiction of the State of Chihuahua) only if they are linked to federal offenses such as drug trafficking, or as instances of organized crime.
30. *Le Monde* (Paris) and *La Jornada* (Mexico City), April 2, 2004.
31. This 2001 film on the violence in Ciudad Juárez, directed by Lourdes Portillo (Xochitl films), can be ordered through her website, [www.lourdesportillo.com](http://www.lourdesportillo.com).
32. From the United States, a march on Ciudad Juárez called V-Day, organized by playwright Eve Ensler in conjunction with Amnesty International, focused unprecedented attention on the problem.
33. "Summary of the Progress Report of Juarez Special Commissioner and Special Prosecutor", Washington Office on Latin America, [http://www.wola.org/Mexico/hr/ciudad\\_juarez/morfin\\_lopez\\_urbina\\_summary.pdf](http://www.wola.org/Mexico/hr/ciudad_juarez/morfin_lopez_urbina_summary.pdf)
34. <http://www.comisioncdjuarez.gob.mx/Portal/PtMain.php?nIdHeader=39&nIdPanel=58&nIdFooter=40>
35. *Ibid.*, and various Mexican papers of June 4, 2004.
36. *Ibid.*, and various Mexican papers of June 4, 2004.
37. House Resolution 90 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 16. For updates in English on the investigations, see the website of the Washington Office on Latin America, at [www.wola.org](http://www.wola.org).
38. "The Situation of the Rights of Women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: The Right to be Free from Violence and Discrimination."
39. EAAF accessed the judiciary files through an agreement between the Juárez Commission and the General Prosecutor of the State of Chihuahua. The local organization "Justice for Our Daughters" later also joined the project. The Juárez Commission requested the report in response to the Recommendations of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights in its special report, "Situation of the Rights of Women in Juárez City, México: The Right Not to Be Subjected to Violence and Discrimination".