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EL SALVADOR**

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Dear President,

The case of **Teodora del Carmen Vásquez** demonstrates the dramatic and unfair effects of the total ban on abortion in El Salvador. She was convicted in 2008 under charges of 'aggravated homicide' and sentenced to thirty years in prison after suffering a still-birth while at work. She has spent more than eight years in jail.

One of her co-workers called the police, who arrived and arrested her at the scene on suspicion of murder. They handcuffed her and only then took her to the hospital where she received the urgent treatment she needed. Teodora was bleeding profusely and fainted once more at the hospital.

Being from a poor family in a rural area of El Salvador, Teodora del Carmen Vásquez could not afford an effective legal team to represent her.

El Salvador has one of the strictest abortion laws in the world. However, Salvadoran legislators will soon be discussing a proposed change to the Criminal Code that, if passed, would end the country's total ban on abortion. As member/sympathizer from amnesty international, I therefore urge you, as chairperson of the appropriate parliamentary committee, to support this planned reform of the Criminal Code.

Yours sincerely,

Cc:

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