

Benita Ferrero-Waldner
Commissioner for External Relations
European Commission

9 July 2007
Ref: B887

Dear Ms Ferrero-Waldner,

Amnesty International report: “Fatal flaws – barriers to maternal mortality in Peru”

Maternal mortality is the single biggest cause of death among women of child-bearing age in developing countries. The overwhelming majority of these deaths are preventable. Peru remains one of the countries with the highest maternal mortality rates in Latin America, despite considerable levels of economic growth in recent years.

Amnesty International is publishing today a new report on maternal health in Peru which documents progress in tackling maternal mortality since the 2006 report, *Peru: Poor and excluded women – Denial of the right to maternal and child health*.

Preventable maternal mortality is a violation of women’s human rights. It violates women’s right to life, to non-discrimination, to the highest attainable standard of health care and to information. In many cases it results from violations of women’s right to freedom from gender-based violence and violations of their right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children. All of these rights are set out in international human rights treaties which Peru has signed and ratified.

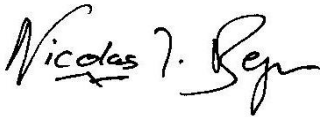
In this report Amnesty International makes five recommendations to the government of Peru. These recommendations, detailed below, should be incorporated into the EU’s Country Strategy Programme on Peru and included in the EU-Peru dialogue:

- allocate adequate resources to maternal and reproductive health care, prioritizing the poorest regions with highest mortality ratios;
- systematically reduce economic, physical and cultural barriers that prevent poor rural and indigenous women from accessing life-saving reproductive and maternal health care;
- ensure the meaningful participation of women in decisions about maternal health care and in the evaluation and monitoring of current processes;
- provide accessible information to women about their sexual and reproductive rights and the right to health; and,

- ensure the adequate monitoring of government policy to reduce maternal mortality, in order to promote effective planning and accountability.

We would be very happy to meet with you or your team to discuss these issues further and would be very grateful for feedback on how these matters are being taken forward in the European Commission co-operation with Peru.

Yours sincerely,



Nicolas Beger

Director

Amnesty International EU Office

Cc: Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy
Riina Kionka, Javier Solana's Personal Representative on Human Rights
Antonio Cardoso Mota, Head of European Commission delegation to Peru