

CGRS Fact-Finding Delegations to El Salvador Investigate Implementation of Anti-Violence against Women Laws Two New Expert Affidavits Available

In 1996, El Salvador enacted a law against intra-familial violence to address the alarming frequency and brutality of the beating, rape, and murder of women, often perpetrated by their own family members. More recently, the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly enacted two additional laws, to address violence against women (2010) and equality for women (2011).



The peaceful landscape of El Salvador

El Salvador has one of the highest rates of violence against women in the world.

Despite passage of these three very progressive laws, violence against women continues unabated. In the first 8 months of 2011, more than 440 murders of women have been reported, many arising from domestic violence. Equally troubling, the mere fact that the laws exist has led to a perception that the Salvadoran government is willing and able to protect women. In fact, fewer than 6% of women's assault cases that were reported in 2010 resulted in a conviction.



Maria Juliana Escobar Gutierrez at the Salvadoran Supreme Constitutional Court

The [Center for Gender & Refugee Studies](#) teamed up with the [UC Hastings Refugee and Human Rights Clinic](#) to conduct fact-finding regarding the implementation of the violence against women laws in El Salvador. Out of our delegations' work have come two expert affidavits to support asylum cases for Salvadoran women who have suffered gender-based violence and are seeking protection in the U.S.

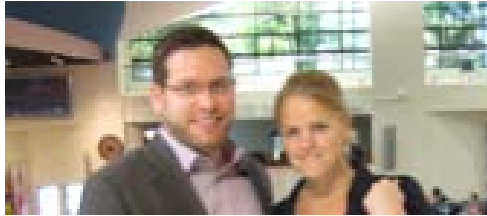
In May 2010, CGRS Director

Karen Musalo traveled with Clinic student Maria Juliana Escobar Gutierrez to El Salvador for an initial fact-finding visit. The two met with a wide range of governmental and non-governmental representatives, including members of the judiciary and the Legislative Assembly. They identified two knowledgeable women attorneys as possible



Dr. Aracely Bayona with Karen Musalo

experts — America Romualdo of [Las Dignas](#), a women’s rights leader and expert on domestic violence, and Aracely Bayona, a consultant to various legislative bodies and expert on gender-based violence. Both women participated in drafting El Salvador’s laws regarding violence against women, and they continue to monitor the laws’ implementation.



Alan Delamora and Alexandra Grayner in the Legislative Palace

In October 2010, Clinic students Alexandra Grayner and Alan Delamora traveled to El Salvador for a second delegation. They conducted meetings with key stakeholders and worked extensively with Attorney Romauldo and Dr. Bayona to develop expert

affidavits that are **available upon request**. The affidavits forcefully demonstrate that deep-seated gender biases have contributed

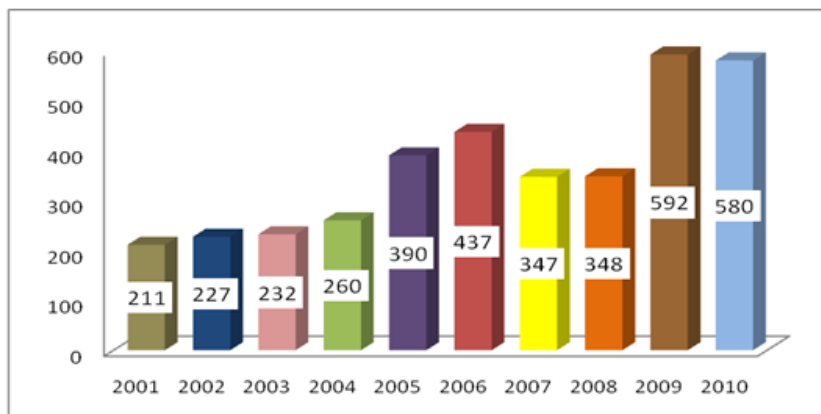
to impunity for gender-motivated aggressors. The affidavits stress the failure to implement the 1996 law on domestic violence, and argue that the new laws will face the same fate without significant societal change.

CGRS’s activities in El Salvador build on our work to combat violence against women in [Guatemala](#), [Haiti](#), and elsewhere. While CGRS continues to support Salvadoran women’s claims for protection in the United States, we are also using the information we gathered to engage with international mechanisms aimed at ensuring that the Government of El Salvador meets its obligations to respect, protect, and promote the rights of women.



Legislator Maria Margarita Velado

RIGHT SIDEBAR



Fuente. Elaboración propia con datos del IML años 2001-2010.

Femicides in El Salvador: 2001 – 2010, Organización de Mujeres Salvadoreñas por la Paz (ORMUSA)

[<http://observatoriodeviolencia.ormusa.org/femicidios.php>]

For statistics on femicides and other violence against women in El Salvador, see the [Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women](#). []

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