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**Nobel Peace Laureate criticizes the delay of justice for victims
Rigoberta Menchú calls for action against the increase of femicide**

By Staff Writers, CIMAC Noticias

Mexico, Federal District, Oct. 6, 11 (CIMAC/Cerigua).- Nobel Peace Prize 1992, Rigoberta Menchú, called upon the Guatemalan state and society to shed their indifference to femicide and the escalation of violent women's deaths that has affected the validity of Human Rights in the past months

In her column *Paxil Kayala*, published in the newspaper *Siglo 21*, the former presidential candidate for the republic stated that the respective authorities - unresponsive to the phenomenon - have acted with tardiness in the majority of femicide cases when they should have taken the necessary measures to accelerate the process.

Menchú indicated that even though the state presumes to be modern, it exemplifies a chauvinist perspective that debilitates not only its organizational structure, but also the participation of citizens, especially of those families that have been victims of the exacerbated hatred against women.

The columnist recognized the struggle of the women's movement to place the issue of violence against women in the public eye and on the political agenda of this Central American country. Furthermore, the struggle has helped in lobbying Congress for the enactment of the Law Against Femicide and other forms of Violence Against Women.

Rigoberta Menchú strongly criticized the ease with which the Guatemalan population accepts violence, as well as the complicities of the justice system which have come to light in the case of Cristina Siekavizza wherein the former president of the Supreme Court of Justice, Beatriz de Leon, was accused of process obstruction and failing to provide information as to the whereabouts of her son and grandchildren.

The Nobel Peace Laureate also rejected as unconstitutional the objections to three articles of the Law Against Femicide as presented by three lawyers from Quetzaltenango.

The Attorney General, Claudia Paz y Paz, has played a decisive role before the Constitutional Court judiciary, presenting arguments in favour of the validity of all articles of the cited law and in the defense of women's right to live free of violence.

Thelma Aldan, recently elected president of the Supreme Court of Justice, is another woman that has worked for the law's implementation in the correct form and in accordance with the reality of the exclusion experienced by women, concluded Menchú.

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