

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SERVICES  
ARLINGTON ASYLUM OFFICE  
ARLINGTON, VA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
In the Matter Of: )  
Jane Doe, ) A# \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant. )  
\_\_\_\_\_)

**Declaration of Ms. Jane Doe in support of  
Form I-589, Application for Asylum, Withholding of Removal, and CAT Relief**

1. My name is Jane Doe, and I am twenty-six years old. I am from Country, but I fear returning to that country because my rapist is there and I am afraid that he W kill me and my family.
2. The fear and terror began C. At the time, I was a cosmetology student at XXXX. I was also very involved in my catholic church, XXXX. There were about nine members of XXXX of which five of us were women. As the XXXX coordinator, I was the group leader and I worked alongside a group of older women, las XXXX, to assign the youth tasks during mass. I also coordinated a bible study group XXXX purpose was to engage young people in our community so that they didn't turn to the drugs and violence that the local gangs like the Maras Salvatruchas and MS-13 were using. San Miguel has a heavy gang presence, and the church actively encouraged young people to turn to the church rather than to gangs.
3. Some time in May of XXXX, alone and in my capacity as the XXXX coordinator, I approached some young men in town and invited them to join XXXX. I suspected that at least some of these men were involved in gangs, and I thought that inviting them to the group would be a good way to help them leave the gang lifestyle behind. I recognized at least one of them, a boy named Y, as a gang member because a ar or so before, one of his best friends who had MS-13 tattoos had raped a neighborhood boy and was killed by the family members of the boy. I explained XXXX goals of luring youth away from gangs and into the church and invited the men to participate in an upcoming bible study. Right away, Y became hostile, telling me that I was wasting my Time with a church group, and that I ought to "take care of myself" and not meddle with them. In our community, "take care of yourself" isn't a nicety that people use; it is a way to threaten another person. It is like saying, "you better watch out because something bad is going to happen to you." Scared by Y's threats, I walked away from the group and later confided in my mother

## Asylum – Sample Declaration – Gang, Religion, Political Opinion

about what had happened. At the Time, she didn't think much of it and neither did I. Up until that point, our family had never had any problems with the gangs so we had no idea how afraid we should have been.

4. On XXXX my sister, XXXX, found a letter on our doorstep that was written to me. The letter threatened to take my son away if I didn't pay "renta" or fee of \$200. The letter provided detailed instructions on how I was to leave the money on a nearby bridge and described how I would be watched from above at a nearby coffee farm that overlooked the bridge. This area was known in town to be used by the gangs. My parents remembered the incident with Y that had occurred less than a month before and immediately assumed that it was his gang that was trying to extort money from me. They believed that Y and his gang decided to threaten me because I had approached them, introducing myself as a member of the church youth group. I was scared of the gang, so I paid the money as instructed.
5. On July XXXX, a second letter arrived, demanding I pay \$200 in the same way and threatening that if I did anything to stop them, my son would pay for it in a very ugly way. Scared by what the gang members were capable of, again I paid the money.
6. On August XXXX, a third letter arrived, and this Time they demanded \$500, claiming that they had been watching me and now knew that my husband was living in the U.S. and sending me money. This Time, my father didn't want me to pay – he said that they would keep asking for money every month, and that we couldn't afford to pay them that amount of money, no matter the threats. I didn't pay the \$500 that day, and nothing happened. I thought that maybe the gang had forgotten about me.
7. On September XXXX, Country's Independence Day, I was reporting to school early, because I had been asked to do makeup and hair for a town parade we were having that day as part of the independence celebrations. I was very pleased that I was going to have this opportunity, because it had been a long Time dream of mine to do the makeup and hair for such an important event. I left my home very early that morning because there was a lot of work to do before the parade was scheduled to start. In order to get to my school, I had to walk down by the river and past the coffee farm, through a part of town that is rather dark and isolated. It was quiet that morning, as I left home when it was still dark and the sun was just starting to rise. As I walked along the river, I remember the sound of crunching dry leaves underfoot, when I heard the footsteps of other people. I started walking faster, but I heard the sound of footsteps coming closer, and then two men jumped out from behind the bushes, one behind and one in front of me, so close to my body that I was trapped and couldn't escape their grip. I tried to escape and defend myself from their assault, but they held on so tight that I wasn't able to wriggle free. One of the men started whispering in my ear, "te lo dije" or "I warned you, I warned you..." As soon as he said that, I recognized the man's voice as Y's and my mind flashed back to the day that I walked up to Y and asked him to join my church youth group. That day, Y warned me and here he was again, reminding me that he had warned me. I kept trying to free myself from their hold while trying not to fall on the ground, but the other man grabbed me by the legs, threw me down to the ground, and kneeled on top of my legs so

that I couldn't move. Meanwhile Y climbed on top of me and raped me. I grabbed at his long hair trying to free myself and saw his face for the first Time. That is when I was able to confirm that, my rapist was Y, the same gang member that I had approached a few months prior while working with XXXX, and the person my family believed had been sending me the threatening letters. I was shocked and horrified.

8. When Y was done raping me, he told me that if I reported him to the police or my family, he would kill my brothers. Then the men took off running, and left me crying on the ground. Despite being shaken and stunned, I gathered myself and continued on to school to do the hair and makeup. I didn't know what else to do, and I knew I couldn't tell my family or the authorities because I truly believed that Y would have my brothers killed in retaliation. I knew that Y had a long history of crimes including robbery and I had no doubt that he was capable of killing.
9. After the terror of that day, I lived in constant fear for my safety and that of my son and family. I kept going to work and school, because I couldn't bear telling my father the reason for my fear. But I also started thinking about a way to escape City and Country. My older brother was living in City, an hour and a half bus ride from City but I knew I couldn't stay with him because Y could easily find me there through his gang which had members in City as well. My sister was living in the capital, about 2 and a half hour's bus ride from our town but I also didn't feel safe staying with her because the Maras have members throughout the country. I didn't have any other family living anywhere else in Country and I didn't even consider trying to go somewhere else inside Country on my own where I would have no roof over my head, and no way to support myself and my child.
10. I called my husband and pleaded with him to help bring me to the U.S. I was desperate to leave because there was no one in City who would protect me and I was afraid that the gang members would continue to pursue me if I tried to relocate to another part of Country. Still, I couldn't tell anyone, not even my husband, why I suddenly needed to leave. I later learned from my husband that he assumed I was so insistent about coming to live with him in the U.S. because I was jealous and afraid that he might find another woman in the U.S.
11. We soon learned that it would cost \$15,000 to pay the *coyote* to take me to the United States. My husband sent me \$6,000 to pay the *coyote* in Country, with the understanding that we would pay the rest once I arrived in the U.S. On November XXXX, I left with the *coyote*, and his assistant who was also my neighbor, another man who was paying to come to the U.S. named Z, and my two-year-old son. The *coyote* told me that we would be picking up another one of his assistants in Mexico.
12. We traveled by foot and by bus XXXX XXXX XXXX where we were to pick up the other assistant. When we arrived, imagine my horror and surprise to see that the additional assistant was Y, the man who had assaulted and raped me in City, and threatened and extorted me. I believe that he had been hiding out in Mexico to avoid possible rape charges if I reported him.

13. As soon as Y saw me he laughed at me I knew instantly, that he remembered who I was and that sent a chill through my body as if all the blood had been drained from me. I couldn't think straight. I just wanted to get as far away from Y as I could. My husband and I had agreed to pay extra money so that I could ride in a car with my son while the other traveler, Z, was going to walk on foot for three days. As soon as I saw Y, I told the *coyote* that I wanted to go by foot with Z. I was willing to do anything to avoid being alone with Y in a car, even if that meant walking through the dessert with my son. The *coyote* however would not let me change my plans. Terrified and desperate I pled with the *coyote* to leave me in Mexico. I told him I no longer wanted to continue on the trip to the U.S. But he wouldn't let me change my mind, and forced me to continue onward into the United States.
14. A few days later we arrived at a hotel somewhere in Arizona. I was terrified. After a day or two my son and I were left with Z, while the coyote and his assistants went to eat. With Z's help, I was finally able to place a call to my husband. My husband told me that he had already been contacted by someone, who had told him that my son and I had been kidnapped, and that he must pay \$10,000 immediately or else the caller would kill his son and rape his wife. I thought in that moment that my heart would stop. When I got off the phone with my husband I warned Z about the threats that my husband was receiving. Z was surprised by this because he had spoken to his own family minutes before I called my husband and they hadn't received any threats whatsoever. I knew then that Y wasn't just trying to get money from us, because if that was his motivation then he would have tried the same thing with Z and his family. Instead, Y was still targeting me and my family for having offended him with my church youth group activities.
15. A few minutes after I hung up the telephone with my husband, Z overheard Y speaking on the telephone in the bathroom. He couldn't make out all of the conversation but he heard Y use the word "Niño" or "son." Z was sure that Y was probably calling my husband to threaten him at that very moment. I felt terrible. As soon as the *coyote* returned I immediately told him that my husband had reported being threatened on the telephone and I explained that I knew that it had to be him because he was the only person outside of Country who had my husband's telephone number. The *coyote* was genuinely shocked by my allegations and swore that he had not contacted my husband. The way he reacted made me believe that he probably had no idea that Y was calling my husband and threatening to kill my son and rape me.
16. XXXX XXXX XXXX, very early in the morning, we left for XXXX We were waiting on a van that was supposed to pick us up and take us to a house in XXXX. We walked all day but the van never arrived, and we kept walking for much of the night before our guides told us that we would have to turn back. The return trip was awful – it was raining very hard, and it was so difficult to walk because the ground was made of sand and was unstable. I fell to the ground many Times, and I felt as though I couldn't possibly keep going. I was carrying my son in my arms, and we had trekked under the hot sun all day, walking by foot, without food, without water, with my son against the heat of my body. My son became so tired and dehydrated that he didn't cry anymore, and I was so

exhausted I had to stop and rest every few minutes. I'll never forget how desperately I clung to my child that day. I just kept thinking that if I held A tightly, then Y couldn't rape me. I clung to A, not even letting him go when I rested. At one point I became so desperate that I ran out into the street hoping that a passing car or Immigration would catch me so that I could escape Y but none of the cars stopped.

17. I tried to keep up but I was falling behind, and we came to a part where we had to pass through a barbed wire fence. Then one of the men who had already crossed asked me to pass my son through the fence to him. There was no way I could pass through while carrying A so I did and the man continued walking with the rest of the group. Meanwhile, Y pushed in front of me and his pant leg got stuck on one of the barbed wires. As he wrestled to break free from the fence, the group continued to move forward putting more and more distance between us. I was the last person to pass through the fence and by the time I did I was so terrified that Y was going to hurt me that I started off in front of him as fast as I could.
18. It was then that Y took the opportunity to attack me again. I felt a blow in my back, as if I had been kicked from behind and I instantly fell to the ground. As I struggled to get up, Y started raping me again, holding my mouth with his hand so that I couldn't cry out for help. I thought to myself, when is his vengeance going to stop? Again, Y threatened to kill my brothers if I ever said a word to anyone about what he had done. I believed him – after what he had done to me, I knew he had the capacity to kill if he wanted to. When I caught up to the rest of the group I took my child back and told no one about what had just happened to me because I was terrified for my safety and that of my family.
19. We returned that night to the hotel where we had stayed previously, and the next day we set off again for Phoenix. The *coyote* assigned Y to travel with me to help me carry my son. I refused his help insisting to the *coyote* that I'd travel on my own. Then I found a group of others traveling and walked with them until the van arrived to take our group to Phoenix. At that point, our *coyote*, Y and the other assistant returned to Mexico while Z and I were met by another *coyote* in Phoenix who arranged for us to stay in a house. After three days, another van came to take me and Z from XXXX. The van dropped Z off about 40 minutes before me so I believe that he is in the area but we never exchanged any contact information and I haven't heard from him again.
20. I arrived at my husband's house XXXX That same day, we paid off our balance to the second *coyote*.
21. For years, I lived in constant fear that Y would carry out his threats. Each Time I spoke to my sister D in Country, she told me that every Time she ran into Y he asked her to say hello to me and find out if I remembered him. At the Time, my sister had no idea that Y had raped me so she continued to pass these messages along to me when we spoke over the telephone. I knew what Y meant by this, I knew that he was continuing to threaten me and my family. Each message left me feeling, shocked and fearful. I didn't dare tell anyone about what Y had done to me, because he continued to threaten me through my family members and I truly believed that he would complete his threat if I spoke out.

22. In XXXX, I received word from my sister D in Country that Y was in jail. She said that the police had arrested him on charges of rape and killing a man in our neighborhood. I assumed that Y would not stay in jail for very long because it is not uncommon for gang members to be released shortly after their arrest. I wanted to feel relief knowing that he was behind bars but I still didn't feel safe telling anyone about what Y had done to me because I knew that it was only a matter of time before he left jail.
23. After almost nine months had passed and Y was still in jail, I started to believe that Y could no longer hurt me or my family. Empowered by this belief, I told my mother-in-law, G, who was living in Fredericksburg, Virginia at the time about Y's rapes. She was very supportive and suggested that I call a sexual assault counselor who had been helping her daughter. At the time, I couldn't imagine sharing what had happened to me with anyone outside of my family so I almost didn't call. Around this same time I discovered that I was pregnant with my second child. Something just didn't feel right about the pregnancy and I worried that I wouldn't be able to care for my daughter because of everything that I was carrying with me as a result of the rapes. I didn't want to bring my daughter into the world knowing that I was still having so many problems of my own. I hoped that therapy might help me to move on from the rapes and be able to raise my daughter.
24. On XXXX, I attended my first counseling session (XXXX XXXX XXXX). I left her office feeling very afraid and uneasy. Within the first month of my meetings with L, I started having terrible nightmares and anxiety about my rapist. I could barely ever fall asleep before the early morning hours and I spent most nights watching television trying not to fall asleep so that I wouldn't have the nightmares. Sometimes, I dreamt that I was back in Country and one of my children had been stabbed but I couldn't get into our locked car in order to get the child to the hospital in time. In other dreams, Y appeared at my parents' home with his sister and held me at gunpoint while his sister laughed at me. In another series of nightmares, I saw my brother W's name on Y's gang's list of people that they planned to kill.
25. Before meeting with L, I was afraid of Y but I wasn't having such constant nightmares or feelings of anxiety. Once we started meeting regularly, I felt stressed all the Time and this affected me physically as well. My muscles in my back and shoulders felt tight and knotted. I also stopped wanting to have sex with my husband and I withdrew from our relationship. I avoided being alone with him because I didn't want to have to talk about what had happened to me or why I was so withdrawn.
26. During this Time, I started having flashbacks to the rapes. One day I was at the store with my son A when he asked me if I would buy him a pair of shoes like the ones he wore on our journey to the U.S. As soon as I looked at the shoes, my mind flashed onto the memory of the rape. Even though I was in the middle of the store, it felt like I was back in the dessert. Once last summer, when my family and I were at the beach, I had a flashback as I walked along the sand. I suddenly felt like I was walking in the dessert

along the U.S. border with Mexico and my mind launched back into the moment when Y raped me.

27. My struggles with those feelings of anxiety became even more difficult once I learned that Y had started threatening my family in Country from his jail cell. Sometime in XXXX, Y started using his gang to send threatening messages to my family. He once again tried to extort money from my family, and threatened to do them harm if they didn't pay. We believe he belongs to the gang MS-13, and they are not a gang to mess with. Once my parents started receiving threats again, my fears increased and all of the horror and trauma from being raped came back to me.
28. XXXX XXXX, a window at my home in XXXX was broken, and before I could call my family to tell them about it, my sister in Country asked me about the vandalism. My sister told me that Y's sister in Country had given her that information. I am terrified – she could have only known that my window was broken if Y was somehow involved. I am convinced that he is doing it to remind me that he is still thinking of me, that he has control, and that he W not hesitate to hurt me or my family.
29. XXXX XXXX, my parents found a dead hen with its throat slit hanging by a noose in a tree in the patio at my parents' home in Country. They knew instantly that it came from Y because at the Time, they weren't having any other problems with anyone else in the area. It is also well known in our community that the Maras use dead animals to threaten people. For example, one of our neighbors was recently killed by a gang and days before his murder, his family found their dog dead and mutilated. The hen made me think that even with Y in jail, no one in my family was safe.
30. XXXX XXXX my parents heard a knock on the door and when they went to see who was there, they found blood smeared on the wall of the house. Around this same Time, my family received so many threatening telephone calls that they had to change their telephone number. While terrified by these recurring threats, my parents didn't call the police because they had discovered that Y's uncle who was living with Y's family at that Time was a local police officer.
31. A few months ago in XXXX, my mother went and picked up the \$200 I send my family each month to help them purchase food and started to return home with the money. She had not been walking for more than ten minutes when she approached the bridge near where I was raped and where the gang had asked us to leave them the money in XXXX. Suddenly, she was attacked by four masked men. Based on her attackers' clothes and the way they spoke to her, she believes that they were young members of Y's gang. They took her money and left her unconscious on the roadside. A neighbor who was driving by found my mother still unconscious and took her to the hospital.
32. My parents reported this attack to the police because they believed that with a hospitalization, someone in the police force would take some action against Y and his gang but when the police arrived at our house to investigate, Y's uncle was one of the police officers in that patrol group. He laughed at my parents and dismissed their

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complaint saying something like “we can’t do anything for you because we know you are Jane’s family.” Nothing more was done to investigate my mother’s attackers.

33. I’m terrified of returning to Country, because I am sure that Y will find me and rape or kill me. Even though he’s in jail right now, it has not stopped him from sending other gang members to threaten and hurt my family. I’m also afraid that he will get out of jail soon. He did not tolerate my involvement with the church, or my stance against youth gangs. He has already caused me to have severe mental anguish and depression because of the rapes and threats against my family. I live in constant fear of him and his gang members.
34. There is no other place in Country where my family and I can live free from the reach of Y’s gang. If they are able to locate my house here in the U.S. and break windows, I’m sure they can locate my family anywhere in Country where they W be able to harm us with impunity. My family is convinced that Y’s gang contacts also reach to nearby states like XXXX because some of the threatening telephone calls that they received in the past came from telephone numbers with area codes in XXXX. For all of these reasons, the only place I feel safe now is in the U.S. where I know that the police W take down my police reports and try to protect me from Y and his gang.
35. My therapist, L has helped me process through what happened to me, and has helped me to live with a little less fear. It is only because of her that I am able to come forward with my story, and ask for help. I want to remain in the United States because it is only in this country that I feel my life and rights W be protected. I am fearful that if I return to XXXX, I will face the same fate as my cousin, XXXX, and so many others who have been killed by the gangs for openly opposing them.
36. In the U.S., I have been able to overcome my fears. It was a very long and difficult process to come to terms with the rapes and their effects but I now feel like an enormous weight has been lifted from me. While my therapy with L has ended, I continue to attend a support group for XXXX XXXX XXXX. While many of the woman in the group are struggling with things I’ve never experienced, just meeting with them and talking about how each of us deals with our own personal struggles has become an enormous source of support. My dream is to someday be able to work as a rape counselor or domestic violence advocate so that I can help women who are suffering like I did overcome their fears.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

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Jane Doe

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Date

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby certify that I am competent in both the English and Spanish languages and that I have translated the foregoing document from the original English into the Spanish language to Jane Doe who has confirmed that she understands the content of this document and believes it to be true and correct to the best of her knowledge, information, and belief.

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Name

Date