



**August 13, 2008.**

**STATEMENT BY MONICA PINEDA, PRESIDENT, AND MARICARMEN GARCIA, VICE-PRESIDENT OF GENTE POR LA DEFENSA ANIMAL (PEOPLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF ANIMALS), BASED IN MEXICO CITY**

My name is Monica Pineda, I am from Mexico City. Maricarmen Garcia and myself are representatives of Gente por la Defensa Animal / People for the Defense of Animals, a non profit organization that protects animals in Mexico.

Mexican animal welfare groups are concerned about sending Jenny, the elephant, to Mexico. People in Mexico are getting sensitive to this topic given that there are several elephants that have to be rescued and need a better place. And they do not understand why Jenny may be sent to Mexico when there are other animals that we need to relocate in Mexican facilities.

Our main area of work is of Wildlife Abuse Cases. In Mexico there is an overwhelming amount of captive wildlife cruelty cases. The lion Kobu is the most representative case showing the low animal welfare standards and lack of law enforcement in Mexico. Kobu lived in a cage in a Primary School and was fed with live stray dogs. It took us two years to rescue him and given that there are no Sanctuaries in our country, the best option was to send him to a Sanctuary in the U.S.

**Kobu is just one out of thousands of cruelty cases that exist because of poor animal welfare protections; why would you choose to send Jenny to Mexico?**

The concern for Jenny's destiny should not focus on Africam, but Mexico's poor animal standards. We recommend that you keep Jenny in the U.S. because Mexico is 80 years behind in animal welfare standards compared to your country. There are no animal control officers; there are serious legal loopholes on wildlife welfare laws,





and poor enforcement of regulations in Mexico which is the responsibility of the Mexican Government. This affects zoos as well.

AZA accreditation does not guarantee –at least in Mexico- animal welfare. We have received many complaints about animals in poor conditions at the other AZA accredited zoo in Mexico.

Jenny's case is a call for reflection by the United States and Mexico. Mexico must seriously rethink the way in which historically it has treated animals, and the City of Dallas must do what is in Jenny's best interest, and that is to send her to The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee to let Jenny live in peace for the last years of her life.

We love our country and are proud of it but the fact is animals are not well protected in Mexico, so we must recommend keeping Jenny in the United States. Africam is a good place for animals but not for Jenny.

We are respectfully making this plea to the Major and City Council of Dallas to reconsider the option of a sanctuary in USA for Jenny.

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