To Die for My Work

We do not see objectively; people think we want to be to be notorious. I do not want the fire line, alerts suspend. I do not want to be a martyr break my struggle, we all have a day and time.

I was in a shelter, under surveillance day and night without being able to see my son.

Isolation constantly shifting, a 'friendly solution'. The adrenaline is like an addiction, my future is this.

I do not want to die now when the criminals want me to, I will die struggling. With that vision I take care of myself under fire, I respect certain rules. A bodyguard I told him: If I die, please give this to my son. He replied ‘If you are killed I will be dead too.’

There are certain things that I do not tell. There are several things I do not know: how to encrypt information, keep things safe, a sound and structured security vision, contingency plan. I do not want to die for my work, I want to die old. So far I have learned how to say no to protect myself.
Composed by Juliana Mensah from an interview transcript of a Mexican woman human rights defender from the research project ‘Navigating Risk, Managing Security, and Receiving Support’, which focuses on the experiences of human rights defenders at risk in Colombia, Mexico, Egypt, Kenya, and Indonesia (securityofdefendersproject.org)