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Hayek Helps Groups Aiding Battered Women

By Ioan Grillo, Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP) – Hollywood actress Salma Hayek has made donations to groups aiding battered women in her native Mexico, calling domestic violence a problem that touches every corner of the globe.

Hayek, nominated for a best actress Oscar for her role in the 2002 film “Frida,” on Tuesday made a \$25,000 donation to a battered woman’s shelter in her hometown Coatzacoalcos, in Veracruz state on Mexico’s Gulf Coast.

A day earlier she donated \$50,000 to anti-domestic violence groups in the northern city of Monterrey, 435 miles north of Mexico City.

“No woman has to be a victim of physical abuse,” Hayek told a Mexico City news conference on Tuesday. “Women have to feel like they are not alone.”

The 39-year-old works with the “Speak Out Against Domestic Violence” campaign of the Avon Foundation, which cites statistics that domestic violence affects one in three women worldwide.

“Every woman who thinks she is the only victim of violence has to know that there are many more,” Hayek said.

The actress was born in Coatzacoalcos and now lives in Los Angeles. She said the United States is not immune to domestic violence.

“It’s not worse here or there, it’s a worldwide problem,” she said.

Attending the news conference with Hayek was Patricia Espinosa, who heads Mexico’s National Women’s Institute.

“There has to be a complete rejection of violence against women. Zero tolerance,” said Espinosa, whose institute recently sponsored a gritty anti-domestic violence campaign showing national female celebrities bruised and battered under the slogan “Hit one of us, hit all of us.”

Hayek is in Mexico promoting the forthcoming release of her new movie “Bandidas.”

Filmed last year in the central state of Durango, “Bandidas” is a Western about two female outlaws set in 19th century Mexico. It was written and produced by French filmmaker Luc Besson and stars Spanish actress Penelope Cruz alongside Hayek.

Hayek is staying at Mexico City’s Four Seasons, the same hotel where U2 is awaiting its scheduled concerts here on Wednesday and Thursday.

She said she spoke with U2 front man Bono late Monday and that the pair hope to do campaigning together in the future on various social topics affecting Mexico and the world.

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