

HONDURAS

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS?

THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE 2013 ELECTIONS



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Honduras. A new perspective on human rights?

Authors: Maria José Vera Valdivieso and Sara Ballardini

Coordination: Maria José Vera Valdivieso

Contributors: Pascal Bodemeijer, Regula Fahrländer, Sarah Fritsch, Eva Scarfe, Pablo Stock Rojas and Maria Giovanna Tejjido Vázquez.

Design and graphics: Matteo Motta (matmot.eu)

Translation: Joanne Hutchinson

Photos: Paola Reyes and PBI

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PRESENTATION

Peace Brigades International (PBI) is a non-governmental organisation that promotes the protection of human rights and conflict transformation through nonviolent means. Via international accompaniment, PBI provides protection for individuals, organisations and communities who carry out actions to promote and defend human rights, always at their request and in response to their needs. In this way, PBI helps to protect the space for human rights, social justice and peace initiatives.

PBI currently has projects in Colombia (1994), Guatemala (1981-1999, 2003), Mexico (1999), Kenya (2013) and Honduras (2013), as well as exploratory work in Indonesia and 16 active national groups in Europe, North America and Australia.

PBI'S MANDATE IN HONDURAS

PBI Honduras seeks to contribute to improving the human rights situation and the development of participatory processes in the country, through an international presence that offers support to protect and extend the workspace of individuals, organisations and other social initiatives that face repression for their work defending human rights.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide an international presence to protect the political and social space of human rights defenders, which helps guarantee the continuity of their ongoing work.
- To raise awareness in the international community about the situation of human rights in Honduras, through the dissemination of information and regular contact with international organisations and the diplomatic corps, both outside and within the country.
- To raise awareness in the international community about the need for policies, tools and mechanisms to protect human rights defenders.
- To communicate to the government of Honduras that the international community is monitoring the human rights situation in the country, by sending information and through ongoing dialogue with the national authorities.

INTERNATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT

OUR INTERNATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT AND OBSERVATION WORK IS BASED ON THREE PRINCIPLES:

Non violence – we accompany individuals, organisations and other social initiatives that peacefully defend human rights.

Non partisanship - PBI is independent of political and economic powers. We maintain working relationships with the different parties involved in the conflict, such as social organisations and public authorities.

Non interference - We respect the autonomy of organisations. We accompany human rights defenders without interfering in their decision-making processes.

INTERNATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS CARRIED OUT THROUGH:

Physical Presence - We visit the headquarters of accompanied organisations and communities – we also attend public events and meetings when they request it.

Meetings with authorities - We explain our work to local, district, national and international authorities. We express concern over attacks against the individuals, organisations and social initiatives that we accompany.

Dissemination of information – we send information to our support network within and outside the country, in order to raise awareness on the reality for human rights defenders.

INTRODUCTION

Since the coup d'état that took place in Honduras on June 28 2009, Peace Brigades International (PBI) has followed with growing concern the serious deterioration of the situation faced by human rights defenders in the country.

In 2010, PBI received a request for international accompaniment from the Honduras Platform on Human Rights (Plataforma de Derechos Humanos de Honduras). Following this, we conducted two visits to the country, one in May 2011 and another in September 2012, to see first-hand the situation human rights defenders face and to assess whether PBI's working methods fitted with their protection needs. The outcome of these missions included two public reports¹ and the opening of an international accompaniment project in 2013.

In this new report, PBI aims to provide an update on the situation of vulnerability and risks faced by human rights defenders within the context of the November 24 2013 elections and the continuing deterioration in the space for human rights work. We will highlight this situation by referring to specific cases that best demonstrate what is happening. However, it is impossible to mention all of the relevant cases in our report, and therefore we would like to stress that the cases presented here are just some of the many examples in Honduras which are having a severe impact on numerous individuals, organisations and communities.

PBI carries out international accompaniment and observation work in countries where human rights defenders suffer constant aggressions. Without this accompaniment they would be unable to freely carry on their work (PBI)



1. "Report on the short-term mission to Honduras. The situation of human rights defenders", PBI Honduras, October 2011 and "The Defence of Human Rights: a high-risk activity", PBI Honduras, January 2011

SITUATION FOR THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN HONDURAS: CLOSURE OF WORKING SPACE

In September 2012, Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, called upon the Honduran government to take measures to address the "chronic insecurity" suffered by those working in the judicial system, journalists and human rights defenders. "Unfortunately, these abominable killings are not isolated cases", said the High Commissioner, "there is a threatening climate of insecurity and violence in Honduras, and human rights defenders are subjected to threats, intimidation, physical assaults and murders. The impunity for these violations is unacceptable"².

2.1 PATTERNS OF ATTACK

Overall, the current situation and the patterns of attacks which have led to a deterioration of space for the defence of human rights are the same as those described by PBI in our earlier reports; namely militarization, baseless criminal proceedings, smear campaigns and defamation, among others

2.1.1 MILITARIZATION AND ACTS OF AGGRESSION

The government of Honduras is dealing with the problem of violence, crime and insecurity by increasing the number of police and army on the streets carrying out public security work. As various international organisations have highlighted, this strategy could lead to more acts of aggression and attacks against those who legitimately and legally defend their rights, especially given the background in Honduras during and after the coup, when members of both institutions committed human rights violations³.

2. "Pillay urge medidas para enfrentar la 'inseguridad crónica' que sufren abogados, periodistas y defensores de derechos humanos en Honduras", September 2012, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: (declaration in Spanish)

3. "Open letter to the presidential candidates in the Republic of Honduras", Amnesty International, November 2013

Honduran human rights defenders want to be able to carry out their work in peaceful and safe conditions (PBI)



Since April 2013, the Lenca indigenous people, accompanied by COPINH, have been carrying out peaceful resistance protests against the Agua Zarca hydroelectric project located in their ancestral territories⁴. They claim that the project is being implemented without a process of free, prior and informed consultation with the affected communities, in violation of ILO Convention 169, ratified by Honduras in 1995. Opposition to the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam and other similar projects, has led to the harassment of several members of COPINH, and more recently, some have had legal complaints made against them. Others have been murdered.

On July 15, 2013, the army fired against members of the Lenca people during a protest demonstration about the Agua Zarca project, resulting in the death of Tomás García, a leader from COPINH. His son, Allan García Domínguez, suffered gunshot wounds. These events were condemned by various institutions, including the IACHR, which urged Honduras to "adopt mechanisms to avoid excessive use of force by government agents (...) and to investigate these acts of violence, resolve them judicially, and punish those responsible"⁵.

2.1.2 BASELESS CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

Human rights defenders often face lawsuits that do not guarantee respect for due process. The use and abuse of the judicial system, characterized by irregularities, false witness statements, unsubstantiated accusations, etc., has on numerous occasions meant that these people are immersed in criminal proceedings which leave them exhausted in both personal and professional terms.

In September 2013, a court in Intibucá issued an injunction against Bertha Cáceres, general coordinator of COPINH, remanding her in custody, and brought further injunctions against Tomás Gómez Membreño and Aureliano Molina Villanueva, members of the same organisation. They were accused of having instigated crimes of land usurpation, coercion and sustained damages to the detriment of the DESA hydroelectric company⁶. The arrest of Bertha Cáceres was considered to be an arbitrary detention by international human rights organisations⁷. Ms Cáceres is a beneficiary of precautionary measures from the IACHR, and has been subjected to other legal proceedings since May 2013 when she was arrested for the illegal possession of weapons.

Also, according to public information, Víctor Fernández, a human rights lawyer representing members of COPINH and the coordinator of MADJ, is the object of a legal complaint made by the La Victoria mining company, accusing him of incitement to commit crime. Mr. Fernández was investigating alleged irregularities in the legal registration of the company and its activities in the department of Atlántida. According to the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, the use of this criminal offence is not only unfounded, but also creates a dangerous precedent for human rights defenders in the country,⁸.

4. "Río Blanco: la lucha legítima del pueblo lenca y la arrogancia de los grandes capitales para el saqueo y la privatización", COPINH, April 2013

5. "IACHR Condemns the Murder of Lenca indigenous leader and injuries to a child in Honduras Military operation", IACHR, July 2013

6. "Alerta urgente de la Organización Mundial contra la Tortura, a favor de la defensora y los defensores del pueblo lenca", COPINH, September 2013

7. "Honduras: Arbitrary detention, and subsequent release, of Ms Berta Cáceres and Mr Tomás Gómez Membreño", Front Line Defenders, May 2013

8. "Honduras: Hostigamiento contra los Sres. Bertha Oliva, Víctor Fernández y Aureliano Molina Villanueva", FIDH, November 2013

LOCAL EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN HONDURAS

In 2010 the EU produced this Strategy in response to the need to adapt the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (2004) to the Honduran context. Having found that the difficulties faced by human rights defenders intensified after the coup of 2009, elements are set out in this document for joint action by Member States, to promote the status of this group, who live a situation of constant risk. The plan of action includes activities such as the regular exchange of information with social organisations, meetings with defenders, dialogue with the government, visits to the offices of threatened organisations, observation of trials against human rights activists, monitoring compliance with IACHR recommendations is available, etc.

Images from the funeral of Tomás García, a member of COPINH, who was shot dead during a protest against the Agua Zarca Project (Paola Reyes)



THE "AGUA ZARCA" HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

This project is being implemented by the Honduran company Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA), which was awarded the concession for the construction of the hydroelectric plant in 2010. The project has funds from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CBEI), which provided a loan to the company in the 2012. The project is being implemented in the departments of Santa Barbara and Intibucá, along the river Gualcarque and affects indigenous Lenca communities in the area including those who live in the Río Blanco region, in the municipality of Intibucá. This community is one of the most affected, and has expressed opposition to the project from the beginning, arguing that it will lead to the privatization of the river, considered to be sacred according to Lenca spiritual beliefs, and that it will cause environmental, cultural and economic damage, the displacement of families and the militarization of the area.

Another relevant case is that of Magdalena Morales, a member of the CNTC, arrested on July 27, 2013 and accused of land invasion. She is currently on trial for her involvement in the land recovery process of a group of small-scale farmers in El Progreso, Yoro. "I am being prosecuted, because I defend the interests of some 1600 families who are living in the streets, who have refused to go away after being evicted, because they do not have anywhere to go. There are more than 56 small-scale farmers on trial, including elderly farmers", she said in October, during the visit of a Swiss delegation⁹.

The IACHR has expressed its concern for the situation of the people and collectives that work in the defence of land and territory, and the use of baseless criminal proceedings to slander them. This was expressed clearly in its 2011 report on American human rights workers. "Those who take forward work on the American continent in the promotion and defence of their ancestral territories and natural resources continue to face discrimination from some national judicial authorities (...) In some states, once authorities have determined the lack of responsibility of indigenous leaders, new actions are begun against the judicial personnel that ruled in their favour, or against the lawyers"¹⁰. The IACHR has also decreed that the Honduran State is obliged to provide protection to these collectives, due to their vulnerabilities and the risks they face. On 18th December 2013 for instance, protective measures were ordered for 38 people due to aggressions they had been victims of due to their actions in defence of the environment¹¹. Of these, 18 are indigenous people from MADJ. Víctor Fernández, mentioned previously, is one of the benefactors of these protective measures.

2.1.3 SMEAR CAMPAIGNS, DEFAMATION AND DISCREDITING

Different sectors of civil society have denounced the existence of a smear campaign against NGOs, which aims to question their work promoting and defending human rights. They have warned repeatedly about the negative consequences associated with stigmatization, including both psychological impacts causing fear and anxiety and physical impact of putting defenders' lives at risk, because this increases their vulnerability in relation to State security forces and illegal armed actors¹².

In February 2013, during a press conference, Colonel Germán Antonio Alfaro accused several human rights defenders and civil society organisations of carrying out a "well-orchestrated campaign of misinformation" and of publishing false and defamatory reports about military force in the Aguán region, damaging the country's image. Alfaro was referring to web sites and individuals who publicly denounce abuses by the military. These individuals and organisations carry out legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights and promote the right to freedom of opinion¹³. "This form of public stigmatisation directly exposes the affected parties to significant risks, taking into account the human rights situation in the Aguán region and, in wider terms, in Honduras, where the criminalization of those who dare to report on agricultural and envi-

Bertha Cáceres, coordinator of COPINH, is being prosecuted because of her work as head of the organization (Paola Reyes)



9. "Delegación suiza lleva compromiso de ser la voz en favor de víctimas de violaciones a DDHH en Honduras", Honduprensa, October 2013

10. "Second report on the situation of human rights defenders" IACHR, december 2011.

11. "Interamerican Commission urges to protect indigenous environmentalists in Honduras", CEJIL, December 2013.

12. "The criminalization of human rights defenders in Latin America. An assessment from international organisations and European networks", Oidhaco, Cifca et al, June 2012

13. "Honduras: Military Commander accuses human rights defenders of orchestrating a campaign of disinformation", Front Line Defenders, February 2013

ronmental conflicts is systematic" said Reporters without Borders¹⁴.

Germán Alfaro once again publicly stigmatised small-scale producers in the Aguán Valley in October: "We have brought the leadership of a small farming group to your attention, they are the ones who are bent on making complaints internationally and putting information on internet sites to discredit and degrade the work of the Armed Forces in the department of Colón" said the military commander¹⁵. In December, the Colonel once again smeared human rights promotion work, accusing U.S. citizen Annie Bird, from the organisation Rights Action, of "going around doing work to destabilize the Aguán region"¹⁶. In a public statement, the Alliance for Human Rights (Alianza por los Derechos Humanos - ADH) has alleged that these statements have put this human rights defender's life in danger¹⁷.

Even President Porfirio Lobo himself, during his recent election campaign, stated that there are "many international organisations claiming that we are in a state of war, that there is political persecution here, but this is not the case, it is not true". The President mentioned that several of his ministers have received many complaints from international NGOs on issues that are not true, thus calling into question the work they do and the allegations they put forward¹⁸.

In November 2013 came news of a new action to discredit human rights work: a TV programme broadcast a diplomatic statement supposedly sent by Jorge Ramos Hernández Alcerro, Honduran ambassador to the United States, to President Porfirio Lobo. The communication contained negative comments about the involvement of some leaders in a meeting with Congress in Washington. "If the cable is genuine, it would show a cynical disregard by a Honduran official for the rights and welfare of community leaders in a country plagued by political violence", commented José Miguel Vivanco of Human Rights Watch¹⁹. Among the leaders referred to in the cable, were Bertha Oliva from COFADEH, and Víctor Fernández from MADJ. Moreover, the programme host discredited Ms Oliva, questioning the truth of her statements and questioning statements regarding the temporary abduction of two PROAH volunteers in the community of Nueva Esperanza, a fact that COFADEH reported at the time. Days after this cable was leaked, Bertha Oliva, Aureliano Fernández and Víctor Villanueva Molina (part of COPINH) were targeted with harassment²⁰.

14. "Honduras: amenazas e intimidaciones a periodistas por parte del ejército y la policía", Reporters without Borders, February 2013

15. "Honduras: Grupo campesino busca desestabilizar proceso electoral", El Heraldo, 26 October 2013

16. "Polémica presencia de defensora de DDHH en zona del Bajo Aguán", Tiempo, 16 December 2013

17. "Comunicado ante acusaciones del Coronel Alfaro Escalante jefe operacion Xatruch", ADH, December 2013

18. "Lobo dice que la campaña contra las elecciones viene de ONGs", Tiempo, 10 October 2013

19. "Honduras: smears put activists at risk", Human Rights Watch, November 2013

20. "Honduras: Harassment against Ms. Bertha Oliva, Mr. Víctor Fernández and Mr. Aureliano Molina Villanueva", Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, November 2013

Bertha Oliva, the general coordinator of the organization COFADEH, has been the target of accusations and stigmatization on several occasions (PBI)



2.2 VULNERABLE GROUPS

The most vulnerable groups, some of whom have been mentioned in our earlier reports, include persons from the LGBTI community, members of the judicial system and journalists.

2.2.1 LGBTI PERSONS

In October 2013, the IACHR expressed its concern about the situation of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and reiterated its call to its member states to adopt measures to prevent and punish such violent acts²¹. Ratifying this concern, the IACHR went on to create in November 2013 a Unit on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons, in order to draw special attention to the rights of this group.

Assaults on LGBTI persons in Honduras have been reported on numerous occasions. This violence was aggravated during the coup d'état, when these groups declared themselves in opposition to the coup. Subsequently this violence has continued, with high levels of impunity. During the UN Universal Periodic Review of Honduras in 2010, many of the recommendations urged the State to take action to end this violence. Moreover, CONADEH's 2012 report also highlights the State's obligation to protect this vulnerable group²².

Some of the most recent attacks involved two raids in the same week and the theft of safety equipment from the offices of the association Rainbow LGBTI (LGBTI Arcoiris)²³. It is important to recall that Donny Reyes, treasurer of the organisation, was arbitrarily arrested in 2007 and beaten by police²⁴. As a result of these incidents and other attacks, the organisation has been granted precautionary measures from the IACHR.

On July 21, 2013, Herwin Alexis Ramírez Chamorro, a transsexual leader and LGBTI rights activist was killed in La Ceiba²⁵. Three months later, Edwin David Cáliz López, was shot dead in Tegucigalpa²⁶.

2.2.2 JUSTICE WORKERS

According to official CONADEH records, 16 lawyers were killed in 2010. This figure increased to 38 the following year, 15 in 2012 and 12 in the first eight months of 2013. In total 65 justice workers have been killed in violent circumstances in less than four years. 97% of the cases remain unpunished²⁷.

It is important to recall the murder of Judge Mireya Efigenia Mendoza Peña,

21. "IACHR Expresses Concern about Mob Attacks, Police Abuse and other Forms of Violence against LGBTI Persons", IACHR, October 2013

22. "Informe Anual 2012", CONADEH, 2012

23. "Segundo allanamiento ilegal y robo en las oficinas de la Asociación LGTB Arcoiris en el plazo de una semana", Front Line Defenders, September 2013

24. "Donny Reyes, tesoro de la Asociación Arcoiris, organización hondureña de defensa de las personas lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transgénero, fue detenido arbitrariamente el 18 de marzo de 2007", Amnesty International (Spain), 2007

25. "Amnesty International condemns the recent killings of people defending justice, equality and human rights", Amnesty International, July 2013

26. "Ultiman a homosexual y hieren a su amigo", LaPrensa, 22 October 2013

27. "Abogados y jueces en el punto de mira del crimen en Honduras", Proceso Digital, 6 August 2013

in July 2013, at the hands of gunmen who shot her as she made her way to her car. Ms. Mendoza, a Judge from the Trial Court (Tribunal de Sentencia) in El Progreso (Yoro department) was a member of the Association of Judges for Democracy (Asociación Jueces por la Democracia), a non-governmental organisation that works to strengthen the justice system in Honduras. The IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression has noted the need for the Honduran State to create specific protection mechanisms to ensure this group's safety²⁸.

2.2.3 JOURNALISTS AND SOCIAL COMMENTATORS

According to the UN High Commissioner for Freedom of Expression and the Honduran government, 28 journalists have been killed since the 2009 coup d'état²⁹.

In April 2013, Fidelina Sandoval, a human rights defender and journalist, was attacked with a firearm a few feet from the TV station where she works³⁰. Ms Sandoval covers news about human rights and social organisations. According to Reporters Without Borders, her case has the same characteristics as that of Karla Zelaya, who was kidnapped, tortured and threatened in November 2012, for her coverage of demonstrations by small-scale producers³¹.

Anibal Barrow, host of a television programme, was kidnapped on June 24, 2013 and subsequently murdered. The IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression condemned the incident, urging the Honduran authorities to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators and masterminds of the crime³².

The body of Manuel Murillo Varela, cameraman and member of the LIBRE political party, was found in Tegucigalpa with three bullet wounds on 24 October 2013. The IACHR had granted Mr. Murillo precautionary measures in 2010, after he reported being the victim of abduction and torture by plainclothes police officers. His murder was condemned by the Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova³³.

In the days following the 24 November elections, several journalists were attacked during the clashes that occurred between police and students. Some days earlier, in the department of Colón, César Obando Flores, from local radio station Libre Estéreo, reported receiving threatening phone calls in which he was told he would be killed if he covered the elections³⁴. On December 7, in the city of Danli, journalist Juan Carlos Argeñal was murdered. According to information received by the OAS Special Rapporteur, Argeñal had received threats apparently related to his journalistic work³⁵.

In light of this situation, the IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression has noted the need for the Honduran State to create specific protection

28. "Honduras: Amnesty International condemns the recent killings of people defending justice, equality and human rights", Amnesty International, July 2013

29. "Senadores de EEUU, preocupados por elecciones en Honduras", El Heraldo, 15 November 2013

30. "Honduras: Shots fired at human rights defender and journalist Fidelina Sandoval", Front Line Defenders, April 2013

31. "News coverage exposes journalists to growing danger", RWB, April 2013

32. "Office of the Special Rapporteur condemns murder of kidnapped journalist in Honduras", IACHR, July 2013

33. "La ONU condena el asesinato del cámara hondureño Manuel Murillo Varela", Europa Press, 3 November 2013

34. "Police violence against journalist during student protests", RWB, November 2013

35. "Office of the Special Rapporteur condemns murder of journalist in Honduras", IACHR, December 2013

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH REPORT

Human Rights Watch (HRW), in its 2013 report, also denounced the alarming situation of LGBTI people in Honduras, considering them as one of the most vulnerable groups, along with journalists and small scale rural producers. The international human rights organisation also highlighted as particularly worrying, the alleged involvement of members of the police in violent attacks on this group. HRW has continuously denounced attacks on LGBTI people in their annual reports, referring also to the impunity in these cases and the ineffectiveness of the Honduran state to address the problem effectively.

mechanisms to ensure the safety of this group³⁶.

Reporters Without Borders has emphasized that “the extreme polarization caused by the elections has increased the dangers for journalists. (...) Restoration of the rule of law nonetheless requires administrative transparency and media pluralism, which in turn requires respect for the work of journalists covering major news developments”³⁷.

2.2.4 WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

On 29 November, to mark the International Day on Women Human Rights Defenders, the Mesoamerican Initiative for Women Human Rights Defenders presented the “Mesoamerican Diagnosis 2012: Violence Against Women Human Rights Defenders in Mesoamerica”³⁸. According to the report, between 2010 and 2012, at least 38 women human rights activists were violently killed in Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. The report also registers a total of 414 attacks on women human rights defenders, with the most targeted defenders those who defend land and territory and those who denounce violence. Of the total incidents, 30% occurred in Guatemala, 28.74% in Honduras and 28.5% in Mexico, and 98% of these cases remain in impunity.

INTERVIEW WITH YESICA TRINIDAD AND KARLA LARA, NATIONAL HONDURAN WOMEN DEFENDERS’ NETWORK (RED NACIONAL DE DEFENSORAS DE HONDURAS)

To understand better the threats that women human rights defenders face in Honduras, PBI interviewed Yesica Trinidad and Karla Lara in December 2013.

What is the National Women Defenders’ Network?

KL: It is a space that brings us women human rights defenders together, that is to say all women who carry out human rights work from within politically organised groups. Some of our colleagues work on women’s rights and reproductive health, and others work on communication, health, land rights, defence of the earth and the struggle against extractive industries.

What is your view of the general situation for women human rights defenders in Honduras?

YT: We are working on a diagnosis of the situation of women human rights defenders in Honduras, and we have gone all over the country, to places where there are land protests organised by our colleagues who are against mining and hydroelectric projects. At Nueva Esperanza we asked to meet with a group of women defenders. We told them what we were doing and one of them said “oh no, none of us are defenders”, and they started to say that the only one who they saw as being a defender was Concepción Gutiérrez, the woman they had to get out when the PROAH volunteers were kidnapped³⁹. So we told them what the word defender meant to us. “Ah, but we do all that” they said, they laughed and they turned around to look at each other because they hadn’t seen themselves in that way before. They explained to us “Look, around here

36. Ibid 35

37. “Police violence against journalist during student protests”, RWB, November 2013

38. “Diagnóstico 2012: Violencia contra defensoras de derechos humanos en Mesoamérica”, Iniciativa Mesoamericana de Mujeres Defensoras de derechos humanos, August 2013

39. “Acción urgente: dos miembros de PROAH secuestrados por hombres armados de la empresa minera en La Nueva Esperanza”, PROAH, July 2013

the men are the ones who protest about things”. The men stand at the entrance to the mine and when they see the cars from the mining company they call out to the women and they come out and they are the ones who put down stones and logs so the cars can’t get past. They make trenches and everything, and the men maintain the roadblock.

Examples like that, make it clear that it is important to go and talk to women and make them aware that the little things they see as small, are actually human rights defence.

Where do the main threats to the work of Honduran women defenders originate?

KL: I would say the State in all its forms: the police and the army ... then there are hired killers, that other kind of organized crime that goes unpunished. We have had a lot of cases we haven’t been able to accompany as we would have liked to, because no-one will recognise where a threat or aggression is coming from, and people always assume that it is associated with drug trafficking, organized crime or gangs.

YT: If you are a defender of women’s rights, you have to face the justice workers, the women’s husbands, the aggressors, who usually get information from judicial officers about who is accompanying the woman in question, who is helping her, and this makes the defender who is accompanying that case even more vulnerable.

KL: The biggest threat for defenders of land rights is prosecution, the criminalization of women who are in this struggle. They are putting women on trial under new charges, such as sedition and usurpation.

YT: Some women’s cases, such as Bertha’s and Magdalena’s, are highly publicized, and they receive support and accompaniment, but women are also being charged who are getting no attention. For example, in El Triunfo, Choluteca, nine women are being charged with crimes and they do not even have a full-time lawyer. And this is not just happening in El Triunfo. We can’t manage to cover it all.

Do you think women human rights defenders are more at risk of suffering domestic violence?

KL: Yes of course, because there is a distinct social pressure on women defenders related to our families. We get told we have left our children, we have abandoned our families, we do not look after our husbands, and we are out roaming the streets instead of looking after our homes.

YT: Imagine! For any woman, dealing with violence is difficult, but for a woman human rights defender it is even more difficult. Because defending human rights is not the same for a woman and a man. A male defender gets “Wow! How fantastic!” he is the saviour of the world.

KL: “He” has sacrificed his family, we have abandoned ours...

YT: They say to you “what are you doing out in the streets with these old women that have nothing better to do, who don’t have anyone to keep an eye on them”. We are not under anyone’s control; they don’t know what to think of us. They might also say to our men “have you seen your wife? One of these days you’re going to see her holding another woman’s hand”. Every day there are less

Yesica Trinidad y Karla Lara, left and right respectively, during a ceremony of the National Network of Women Human Rights Defenders in Honduras (PBI)



MESOAMERICANAN WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS’ INITIATIVE

The Initiative aims to document and publicize the violence faced by women defenders in Mesoamerica and to develop alternatives for self-protection, protection and security. Its work is based on the belief that a deep and continuous assessment of violence towards women defenders is essential to prevent attacks and respond to them appropriately, thereby ensuring the continuity of their work.

The First Mesoamerican Meeting on Human Rights Defenders was held in April 2010 in Oaxaca, Mexico. The meeting brought together more than 50 defenders from different countries in the region. The meeting served to highlight the need to document cases regionally and to track them, as well as the need to strengthen networks and provide joint responses. Currently the initiative is formed by a steering group, a rapid response network and national platforms that work with the coordinating committee.

and less opportunities to share and do things that were so normal before, like go for a coffee in the park or let the children go and play outside.

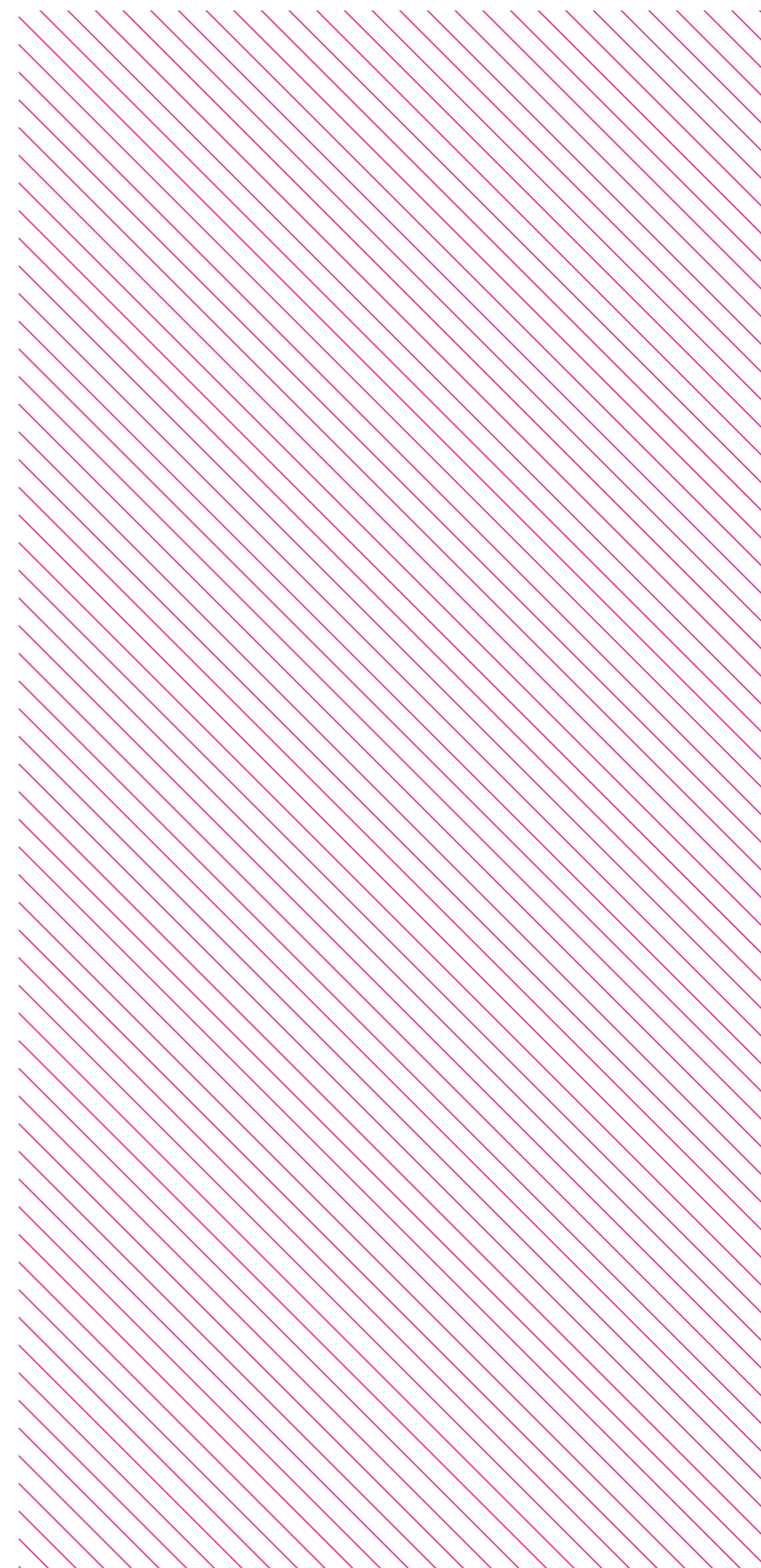
KL: Imagine a man walking in the street, he might come out of Próceres street and say "I'm going to San Felipe, but there are usually police at the bus stop, I think I'll walk". Do you think that a woman would be able to walk? The police would touch her and say "ooh darling, you're looking gorgeous, blah blah blah".

YT: They don't see that as violence. Violence is when they hit you, when they bruise you. You pass a cop and they say "hey gorgeous" and touch you, that's not violence to them. "Well, why were you walking so close to them?" people say, or "why were you walking around like that?" or "what did you expect?" Male human rights defenders get chased, threatened, and shot at, but for women defenders it is even more difficult because you suffer everything the men do, but they can also rape you, you also have to suffer sexual harassment because of the work you do.

What is your analysis of the future? What will happen to women human rights defenders?

YT: I think the criminalization of human rights defenders will increase, and that there will be more defenders with unfounded charges against them. I think attacks against women will be even more widespread, because more and more transnational companies will come, there will be more protests, but more women will also be killed, and there will be more women defenders in prisons...

National Honduran Women Defenders' Network (Red Nacional de Defensoras de Honduras): http://www.comppa.org/wordpress/?page_id=1659



ELECTORAL CONTEXT

3.1 ELEMENTS FOR CONCERN BEFORE THE ELECTIONS OF 24 NOVEMBER 2013

3.1.1 HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

Different national and international organisations have expressed alarm at the human rights situation in Honduras. The pre-electoral panorama meant that these concerns were more widely voiced, in the hope that the candidates would commit to addressing them in their election programs.

Several initiatives aiming to address the problems in the country were begun during the pre-election process. One example of this was the signing by presidential candidates of the National Pact for Human Rights (Pacto Nacional por los Derechos Humanos), in August 2013⁴⁰. In this pact they agreed to "make all institutional efforts to respect and promote human rights", pledging, among other things, to establish the First Public Policy and National Plan of Action on Human Rights.

The First Human Rights Public Policy and the National Plan of Action on Human Rights⁴¹ referred to in the Pact were adopted on January 22, 2013, in the understanding that "significant gaps remain in Honduras to guarantee respect for civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights", and taking into account the recommendations made to the Central American country by mechanisms of the UN and the Inter-American Human Rights System. Indeed, specific actions were established to address the situation of human rights defenders, such as: creating a special law recognizing the right to defend human rights, establishing guidelines to sanction public servants criminalizing this work, and harmonizing national legislation with the UN Declaration on the Right to Defend Human Rights. At the time of writing this report there is already a draft bill for a "Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Commentators and Justice Workers"⁴², pending approval by Congress. However,

40. "Gran pacto nacional por los derechos humanos en Honduras", Secretaría de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, August 2013

41. "Primera política pública en derechos humanos y Plan Nacional de Acción en derechos humanos", Secretaría de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, December 2012

42. "Proyecto de Ley para la protección de las y los defensores de derechos humanos, Periodistas, Comunicadores Sociales, y Operadores de la Justicia", Secretaría de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, 2013

er, some national and international organisations have already expressed concern about the gaps in this document which would present a problem for the effective protection of these groups⁴³.

The international community has expressed concern about events which have affected the impartiality of the judiciary. The FIDH mentions in its post-election report that "serious situations of political interference or irregularities in the appointment of senior officials linked to the administration of justice (...), situations that call into question the independence of the judiciary and confidence in the Public Prosecutor's Office, have raised serious concerns"⁴⁴.

One example of this is the dismissal of four judges of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court by the National Congress in December 2012. Gabriela Knaul, UN Special Rapporteur on Judicial Independence, described the act as a "serious attack on democracy in Honduras" and recalled that the principles of stability and the tenure of judges are an essential guarantee to protect judicial independence⁴⁵. Other international organisations, such as the FIDH also expressed alarm at the action taken⁴⁶. Similarly, national bodies such as CONADEH categorized what had happened as "an arbitrary, unfair and flawed act of public administration, personified by the National Congress"⁴⁷.

The election of the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney, in August 2013, also led to protests by those who considered that this had been carried out in an irregular and non-transparent way. The Coalition against Impunity (Coalición contra la Impunidad), comprised of more than 20 organisations from Honduran civil society, demanded a statement from Congress suspending the election of the prosecutor, as this had been carried out in violation of the Constitution⁴⁸.

The Human Rights Attorney's Office (Fiscalía de Derechos Humanos - FEDH), was restructured in October 2013. Some organisations have stated that this move was accompanied by measures such as the re-assignment of attorneys who were making progress on emblematic cases involving human rights defenders⁴⁹. The affected attorneys publicly denounced the measure, arguing that the measure had been taken because "we are making the system uncomfortable, by accusing powerful groups of committing crimes"⁵⁰. Another measure was also introduced under which homicide cases involving state actors will be investigated by another attorney's office. This is seen as undermining the FEDH, at a time when people are demanding that the office should be strengthened⁵¹.

Honduran social organisations are protesting about the human rights situation in the country, calling for the promotion and defence of these rights (PBI)



43. See hearing "Implementation of precautionary measures in Honduras" IACHR, 28 November 2013

44. "Elections in Honduras: militarisation and serious attempt [sic] to the Judiciary", FIDH, CIPRODEH y COFADEH, November 2013

45. "Grave atentado a la democracia en Honduras la destitución de magistrados de la Sala Constitucional", OHCHR, January 2013

46. Ibid 45

47. "Informe anual del Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos sobre el estado general de los derechos humanos en Honduras y el desempeño de sus funciones", CONADEH, 2012

48. "Coalición contra la Impunidad: Elección de Fiscal es un proceso oscuro con graves irregularidades", Defensores en línea, August 2013

49. "Castigan a fiscales del Ministerio Público comprometidos en la lucha contra la corrupción en Honduras", IFEX, November 2013

50. "Cisma y malestar en el MP por rotación de fiscales", El Heraldo, 28 October 2013

51. "Elections in Honduras: militarisation and serious attempt [sic] to the Judiciary", FIDH, CIPRODEH y COFADEH, November 2013

THE CASE OF LOPEZ LUNA VS HONDURAS: THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC POLICY TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

On May 18, 1998, Carlos Antonio Luna López, environmentalist and human rights defender, was killed in Catacamas, Olancho department. The case was brought before the IACHR, who concluded in its judgment that the State of Honduras was responsible and issued a series of recommendations. However, given that these were not fulfilled, the case passed over to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

The Court issued a decision in October 2013, which reminds Honduras of the obligation of states to “provide the necessary means so that human rights defenders (...) can freely carry out their activities; protect them to avoid attacks against their lives and create conditions for the eradication of violations by state or private agents and effectively investigate serious violations committed against them, fighting impunity”.

The Court ratifies in its judgment the responsibility of the State in the violation of this defender’s human rights, including his right to life. It also establishes a set of recommendations for reparations to the victims, including the obligation to conduct a thorough investigation and punish those responsible. It also urges the State to effectively implement initiatives for the protection of human rights, within a reasonable time scale. With regards to the “Law for the protection of human rights defenders”, the Court establishes a series of requirements that this law must fulfil, such as the participation of civil society in its development; the adaptation of protection mechanisms to the needs of each defender; the promotion of a culture of legitimacy for the work of human rights defenders and the provision of adequate human and financial resources.

The decision of the Court was celebrated by human rights and environmental groups, who welcomed its emphasis on the vulnerability of human rights defenders and the risks they face. While the judgment specifically considers attacks on environmental activists, noting that between the years 1991-2001, 16 environmentalists were killed, it also mentions the risks faced by anyone who works to defend and protect any fundamental right.

The judgment’s order to adopt a comprehensive public policy to protect human rights defenders was also seen as positive, given the complicated risk situation they face.

3.1.2 ATTACKS AGAINST CANDIDATES OR THOSE WITH LINKS TO POLITICAL PARTIES

Violence was also observed during the electoral process against candidates and members of all the political parties in the race, especially at the departmental and municipal levels.

The FIDH has compiled 39 murder cases and six cases of attacks against political opponents in recent months⁵². Similarly, according to Rights Action, by October 2013, 35 active members of different political parties had been murdered⁵³. Members of the U.S. Senate expressed concern in a letter to Secretary of State,

52. “FIDH recopiló 39 asesinatos y seis atentados contra opositores políticos en los últimos meses”, Defensores en línea, November 2013

53. “Context of the Honduran Electoral Process 2012-2013: Incomplete list of Killings and Armed Attacks Related to Political Campaigning in Honduras”, Rights Action, October 2013

John Kerry, calling for every effort to be made to ensure free, fair and peaceful elections in Honduras⁵⁴. “I am very concerned about the continuing violence in Honduras and the impact of this on the elections of 24 November (...) we are receiving reports of threats against journalists and even murders of candidates”, said Tim Kaine, the author of the letter and a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

3.1.3 ELECTORAL CLIMATE

According to surveys conducted prior to Election Day on November 24, there is widespread discontent among Honduran citizens with regards to the party system, citizens are dissatisfied with the democratic system and do not trust its institutions. These surveys show that 75% of the population is dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy and 52% have no confidence in political parties⁵⁵. This data can be used to measure the health of a country’s democracy, and can be taken into account when analyzing the electoral process.

The appearance of alternatives to the existing two-party system was seen as positive for the Honduran political spectrum, which has historically been dominated by the National Party and the Liberal Party. Of the nine parties that converged in the elections, four emerged after the coup.

Nevertheless, several recent events have meant that the electoral process continues to be viewed with caution and scepticism by some sectors.

Since as early as 2009, following the coup, but also after the primary elections held in November 2012 in which irregularities were detected, a number of organisations have been demanding electoral reform; however, this has not yet been achieved. The report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission “So that events are not repeated” put forward 13 recommendations on this issue, none of which have been implemented so far. Among the changes demanded by the Commission are a purge of the electoral roll, greater transparency in the financing of election campaigns and non-biased electoral bodies⁵⁶.

Furthermore, some sectors have called into question the impartiality of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral - TSE), the highest-ranking institution for ensuring the legality of the electoral process. This is related to the fact that two of its members already held elected positions when they were elected to the TSE, in violation of Article 52 of the Constitution⁵⁷.

In the months prior to the elections questions arose regarding the Honduran government’s ability to conduct free and fair elections. As a consequence of this, several national and international agencies deployed observer missions to monitor the electoral process and to ensure its transparency and compliance with the law. According to the EU, these elections were the most closely observed in the history of Honduras, with 700 international observers and international companions and 20 national observation missions, which deployed a total of 15,000 people as observers⁵⁸. There were reports of intimidating actions towards these international delegations by the Immigration Department, which raided their hotel to register some of the mission members⁵⁹.

54. “Violencia en Honduras preocupa a senadores de EE. UU. previo a elecciones”, Prensa Libre, 13 November 2013

55. “El descontento ciudadano y la reconfiguración del sistema de partidos”, CESPAD, December 2012

56. “Findings and recommendations: so that events are not repeated”, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, July 2011

57. “Ambiente inconstitucional y elecciones generales en Honduras”, Radio Progreso, November 2013

58. “Declaración preliminar: una votación y un recuento transparentes tras una campaña opaca y desigual”, Misión de Observación Internacional de la Unión Europea, November 2013

59. “Honduras: agentes del estado hondureño hostigan e intimidan a observadores internacionales de derechos humanos”, Aler, November 2013

3.2 ELECTIONS

With 61% participation, elections were held on 24 November. The official results showed Juan Orlando Hernández from the Partido Nacional as the winning candidate, with 36% of the vote. The Partido LIBRE candidate, Xiomara Castro, won 28% of the vote and the candidate placed third was Mauricio Villeda from the Partido Liberal with 20%.⁶⁰

Immediately after the election results, numerous allegations of irregularities were made and some sectors of Honduran civil society rejected the official results. In subsequent weeks different reports were released evaluating the electoral process, most of which emphasize the existence of anomalies.

The initial statements of the EU and the OAS described the vote count as “transparent” and the results given by the TSE as “reliable”⁶¹. Nevertheless, in its preliminary report, the EU details a number of different irregularities, such as the unreliability of the electoral roll, the clear imbalance in the visibility of the parties in the media and the poor regulation of the party funding system. The report also highlights some positive elements, such as the transparency of the TSE and the diverse representation of parties in the polling stations⁶². It is important to mention one fact highlighted by one of the EU observers, who said that the elections were “not very transparent” and “dishonest”. The EU immediately disowned him, claiming he was violating the code of conduct for European observers⁶³. A group of European citizens, organized in the “HondurasDelegation” working group, wrote an open letter to the EU Commission, reporting various irregularities and expressing their dismay about the Delegation’s preliminary statement⁶⁴.

At the time of writing our report, the OAS has not yet published its findings.

Honduran civil society organisations were more forceful in their assessment of the elections. CESPAD expressed doubts about the transparency of the process and, offering a more global analysis, about democracy in the country. They spoke of irregularities such as trafficking in credentials, which resulted in the Partido Nacional having control over some polling stations. They also alleged that some records had been adulterated, and that there had been technical problems in the transmission of data in the polling stations. CESPAD contextualize these facts within a broader framework of institutional fragility, emphasizing the partiality of the TSE, the lack of purging of the electoral roll, the lack of clarity in the funding of political parties, unequal election campaigns and media bias⁶⁵.

The Honduran Centre for Documentation (Centro de Documentación de Honduras - CDH) coincides with this, noting irregularities and stating that although international observation is positive, it is problematic that most of the missions only observed the first phase of the process and neglected the other phases, such as the transfer of records to the TSE and the filing of the records in the TSE itself⁶⁶. Some of the parties in the election also denounced inconsistencies and asked the TSE to recount the votes⁶⁷.

60. Tribunal Supremo Electoral: <http://siede.tse.hn/escrutinio/index.php>

61. “UE y OEA ratifican que elecciones en Honduras fueron pacíficas y transparentes”, La Prensa, 26 November 2013

62. “Declaración preliminar: una votación y recuento transparentes tras una campaña opaca y desigual”, Misión de Observación Electoral de la Unión Europea, Tegucigalpa, 26 November 2013

63. “Unión Europea desautoriza a observador en elecciones de Honduras”, La Prensa, 29 November 2013

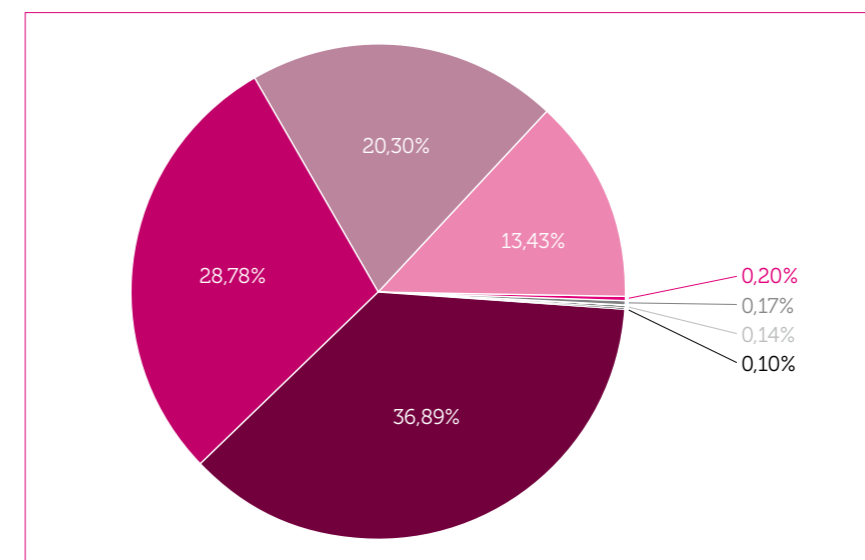
64. “Carta abierta a la Misión de Observación Electoral de la Unión Europea”, Hondurasdelegation, November 2013

65. “Elecciones Generales 2013: con más Frustraciones que Aciertos. Informe de observación”, CESPAD, November 2013

66. “Resultados electorales: dudas y gobernabilidad política en Honduras”, CEDOH, December 2013

67. “Partido Liberal anuncia más de 2.000 inconsistencias”, El Heraldo, 27 November 2013

Polling station during the elections of 24 November 2013 (Paola Reyes)



OFFICIAL ELECTIONS RESULTS 2013

SOURCE: TRIBUNAL SUPREMO ELECTORAL DE HONDURAS, GRAPH DESIGNED BY PBI

- National Party of Honduras
Partido Nacional de Honduras
(Juan Orlando Hernández)
- Liberty and Refoundation Party
Partido Libertad y Refundación
(Xiomara Castro)
- Liberal Party of Honduras
Partido Liberal de Honduras
(Mauricio Villeda)
- Anti-Corruption Party
Partido Anticorrupción
(Salvador Nasralla)
- Patriotic Alliance Party
Partido Alianza Patriótica
(Romeo Vásquez)
- Christian Democrat Party
Partido Demócrata Cristiano
(Orle Solís)
- Innovation and Unity Party
Partido Innovación y Unidad
(Jorge Aguilar)
- UD-FAPER Alliance
Alianza UD-FAPER
(Andrés Pavón)

CONCLUSIONS

Honduras was in the international spotlight after the coup d'état in 2009 because of human rights violations committed during that period, leading to public condemnation from wide-ranging sectors. Nevertheless, after a while the attention died down, even though the situation on the ground in the Central American country has continued to be alarming. The elections of November 24, 2013 once again drew attention to problems in the country and it has been shown that five years after the coup, the Honduran State does not protect or promote human rights or the integrity of human rights defenders.

PBI first described this reality in our 2011 and 2012 reports. In this 2013 report, we have described how events this year have not only shown little improvement, but also reflect the way in which certain dynamics that affect human rights defenders continue to occur and have even increased.

The patterns of attacks, for example, remain the same, and include trumped up charges, militarization, defamation, physical assault, to name a few. Similarly, the violence has continued to particularly affect those who defend the land and sovereignty of indigenous and small-scale farming populations, as well as those claiming LGBTI rights. Also of concern is the frequency and severity of attacks against media and legal professionals.

The role of women defenders is still not recognized, even though their risk situation and vulnerability is alarming, within a society where high levels of violence against women continue and remain unpunished.

The high levels of impunity and attacks on the independence of the judiciary have led to particular concerns in 2013, both nationally and internationally.

In the specific context of the elections, PBI has noted how, despite international attention towards the process and its smooth operation, attacks have continued taking place affecting work in defence of human rights. It is important to highlight the harmful consequences of remarks made by representatives of the State against national and international social organisations. These comments expose national organisations to an even higher risk than they are already suffering, and discredit the reports of international organisations, promoting an environment of vulnerability and impunity.

On the 10th anniversary of the implementation of the EU Guidelines on human rights defenders (2004), and the 15th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Defend Human Rights (1998), we again call upon the international community to fulfil its role to protect those who defend and promote human rights in Honduras.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PBI TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

In light of the above information, it is important to reiterate to the international community some of the recommendations we already made in 2011 and 2012, as well as adding some extra recommendations, with the aim of contributing to an improvement in conditions for human rights defenders.

In order to strengthen international protection mechanisms for this work as well as to ensure compliance with international human rights standards, we ask that:

THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM:

- carefully reconsider the request of several international bodies and the government of Honduras to establish an office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the country;
- respond to the open invitation extended by the government of Honduras to the Special Procedures and schedule visits designed to monitor the status of economic, social and cultural rights.

THE ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES AND ITS MEMBER STATES:

- remind Honduras of its responsibility as a member of the OAS and signatory of the American Convention on Human Rights, in following up on the recommendations of the Inter-American System of Human Rights;
- ensure that their policies and mechanisms for cooperation and trade as well as the actions of their companies in the Member States, fully respect the observance of human rights.

THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

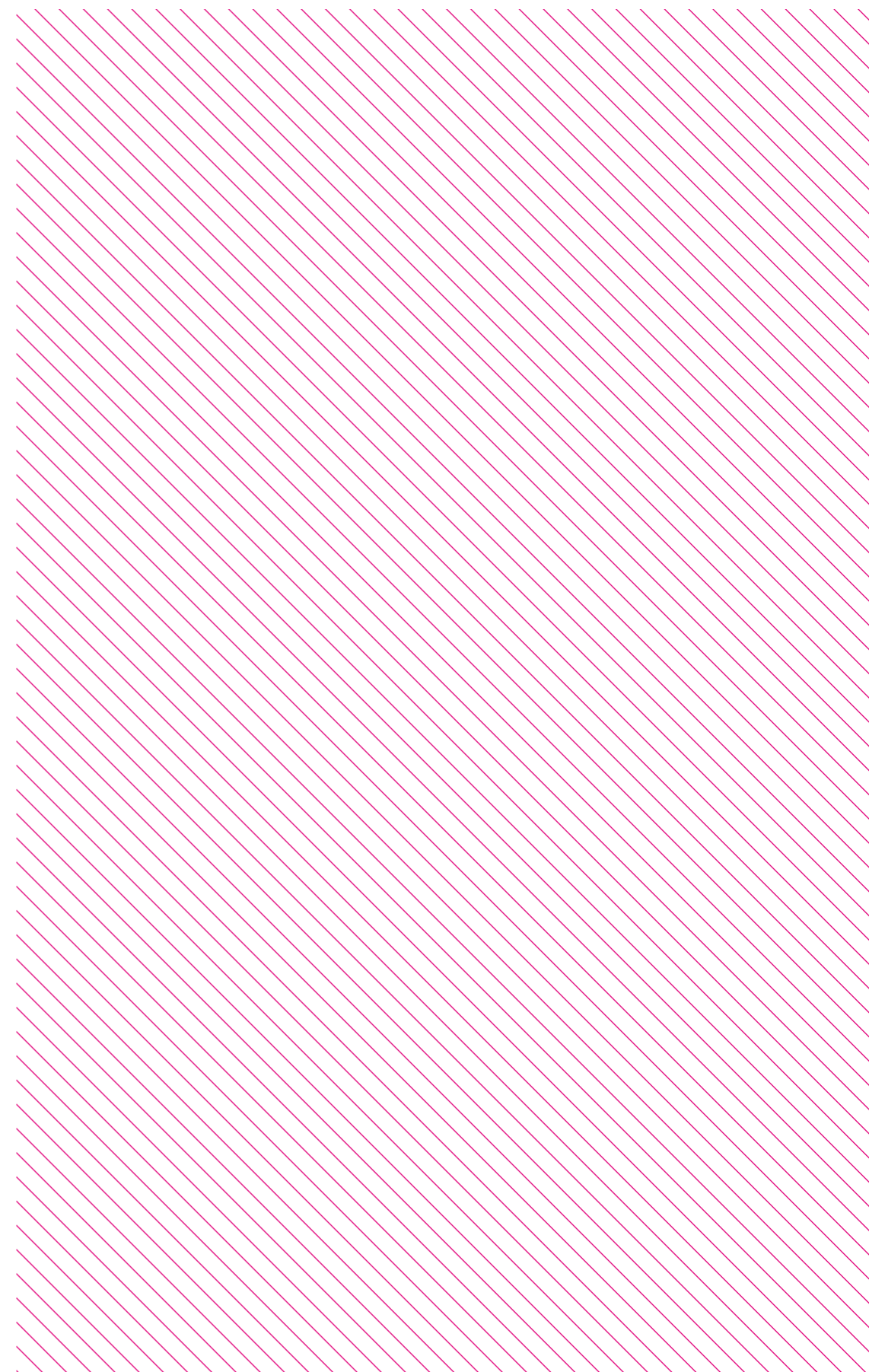
- in light of the "open and ongoing" invitation extended by the Honduran State to the IACHR, perform a field visit of the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, as well as the new Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People, which will begin its work in February 2014;
- urge the Honduran government to approve the "Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Social Justice Operators" pending since August 2013, as this Law provides for a specific budget to implement the Law, the agreement of protection measures with the beneficiaries and sanctions for public officials who do not meet their responsibilities in regard to the safety of defenders.

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES:

- strengthen the implementation of the Local Strategy of the European Union for Human Rights Defenders in Honduras, making more statements in favour of this work, publicly rejecting any act of aggression, making visits to defenders' offices or public events, attending public hearings in criminal proceedings against defenders, among other things;
- devote more resources to the dissemination of the Strategy among civil society organisations, especially the more remote regions furthest from the capital;
- ensure that the development of EU programs aimed at guaranteeing the protection and promotion of human rights, provide for consultation processes with civil society, as well as indicators and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation;
- lead, from within the G16, the creation of a space to examine the performance of the judiciary in particular cases of attacks and criminalization processes against human rights defenders;
- ensure that their policies and mechanisms for cooperation and trade as well as the actions of European companies, fully respect and comply with human rights.

ACRONYMS

ADH	Alianza por los Derechos Humanos
CDH	Centro de Documentación de Honduras
CESPAD	Centro de Estudios para la Democracia
CNTC	Central Nacional de Trabajadores del Campo
COFADEH	Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras
CONADEH	Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos
COPINH	Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras
ESCR	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
EU	European Union
FEDH	Fiscalía Especial de Protección a los Derechos Humanos
FIDH	Federación Internacional de los Derechos Humanos
IACHR	Inter American Commission on Human Rights
IACtHR	Inter American Court of Human Rights
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LGTBI	Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual and Intersex
MADJ	Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad y la Justicia
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
Partido LIBRE	Partido Libertad y Refundación
PBI	Peace Brigades International / Brigadas Internacionales de Paz
PROAH	Proyecto de Acompañamiento Internacional en Honduras
TSE	Tribunal Supremo Electoral
UE	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation




Peace Brigades International (PBI) is a non-governmental organisation that promotes the protection of human rights and conflict transformation through nonviolent means. Via international accompaniment, PBI provides protection for individuals, organisations and communities who carry out actions to promote and defend human rights, always at their request and in response to their needs. In this way, PBI helps to protect the space for human rights, social justice and peace initiatives.

PBI currently has projects in Colombia (1994), Guatemala (1981-1999, 2003), Mexico (1999), Kenya (2013) and Honduras (2013), as well as exploratory work in Indonesia and 16 active national groups in Europe, North America and Australia.

PBI accompaniment and observation work is inspired by three principles: no violence, no partisanship and no interference.

PBI activities on the ground are physical presence, meetings with authorities and dissemination of information to a wide support network within and outside the country.

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Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

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