

via fax: 011 505 2221 5667  
**Sr. Luis Alberto Rubí**  
 Attorney General of Honduras

via fax: 011 504 2220 1756  
**Sr. Pompeyo Bonilla**  
 Minister of Security of Honduras

February 13, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are very concerned for the safety of **Patricio Vindel**, a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights activist and president of Pro-Union Organization (OPROUCE) in La Ceiba, Atlántida Department. OPROUCE works on HIV prevention and raises awareness about human rights of the local LGBT community.

On the afternoon of January 21 a suspicious vehicle without a license plate passed the office several times. On January 22, while the staff of OPROUCE was away from the office for a workshop, unknown individuals broke into the yard outside the office and spray painted a message on the wall that said "Patricio you're going to die." He immediately reported the incident to the Human Rights Ombudsman and to the police, who came that day and collected evidence.

Between August and October 2012 Patricio Vindel received several threatening text messages in which the sender made reference to his sexual orientation in a derogatory manner and said they knew where he lived and that someone would be sent to kill him.

These are the latest incidents that highlight the dangers faced by human right defenders. Amnesty International has not yet received a reply to an open letter they sent to the Honduran government in May 2012 urging them to take immediate steps to address the sharp increase in attacks and threats against journalists and human rights defenders. In February 2012, following a visit to Honduras, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders urged authorities to establish a protection program for human rights defenders and identified LGBT as being a particularly vulnerable group.

The LGBT community is an integral and vocal faction of the national resistance movement that coalesced after the military coup d'état in June 2009. Because of their political activism, they are the target of human rights abuses, including assassination. More than 80 LGBT Hondurans have been killed since the coup.

Because we believe Patricio Vindel's life is at risk, we **strongly urge** you to

- conduct an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threat against Patricio Vindel, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate steps to fully provide appropriate protection to Patricio Vindel, in accordance with his wishes;
- enable human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: OPROUCE ~ via email  
 Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751  
 Lisa Kubiske, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037  
 Nathan Anderson, Attache for Human Rights and Labor, US Embassy to Honduras ~ via email  
 Benjamin Gedan, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax 202.647.2597  
 Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email  
 Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458.3992  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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**The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter:**