

via fax: 011 504 2290 5088 Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández President of Honduras	via fax: 011 504 2221 5667 Sr. Oscar Chinchilla Banegas Attorney General of Honduras
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December 25, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are disappointed to learn of the Honduran government's misuse of the judicial system to stifle freedom of expression. Globo TV journalist **Julio Ernesto Alvarado** has been silenced, banned by a judge from working as a journalist.

On December 9, 2013, the Honduran Supreme Court ordered a 16-month work ban on Julio Ernesto Alvarado. This resulted from charges brought against him by the former dean of the economics faculty at the Autonomous National University of Honduras because he had reported on Supreme Court charges against her on his news program *Mi Nación*.

For almost a year, the order had not yet been implemented. On November 5 of this year, noting that Alvarado's "grave and urgent" situation could result in "irreparable harm" to him, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issued precautionary measures for the journalist and asked the Honduran authorities to stay implementation of the order and not prevent him from working until it had ruled on the substance of the case. But on December 4, while members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAHCR) and the IAHCR Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression were visiting Honduras, a judge announced that the ban would indeed go into effect.

The prevailing climate in Honduras is one of news control and media harassment, with opposition and community media, in particular, being subjected to judicial persecution. Since the coup d'état in June 2009, Honduras has been one of the most dangerous countries for media personnel in the world. Journalists are threatened, attacked and murdered with almost complete impunity. According to the National Commission for Human Rights (CONADEH), 91% of the 47 murders of journalists monitored since 2003 have remained unpunished. The 2014 Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index ranks Honduras 129th out of 180 countries.

We strongly urge that the Supreme Court reverse the ban and allow Julio Ernesto Alvarado to continue his legitimate work as a journalist.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: Jorge Alberto Milla Reyes, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
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US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, 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: