

via fax: 011 504 2239 3298
Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández
 President of Honduras

via fax: 011 504 2221 5667
Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas
 Attorney General of Honduras

July 4, 2017

Dear Sirs:

We are stunned at the murder of **Roberto Antonio Gómez**, on June 23 in Tegucigalpa. He is the father of student and human rights defender **Andy Johan Gómez Jerónimo**.

On June 23, Roberto Antonio Gómez was murdered while travelling to his house in the La Esperanza neighborhood of Tegucigalpa. In the previous four weeks, he had been active in denouncing the state security forces' repression of students at UNAH (National Autonomous University of Honduras). His son Andy Johan Gómez Jerónimo is a student at UNAH and a member of the University Student Movement (MEU) which struggles for fair and free access to education and for student participation in the management of the university. Since 2014, when UNAH approved several changes in its internal norms resulting in restricted access to the right to education, the student movement has engaged in widespread peaceful protests (cf our letter of April 15 2015).

On July 20, 2016, after a wave of protests, criminalization of students and police repression, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) mediated an agreement between UNAH and MEU, whereby the authorities agreed to end criminal procedures against student activists, recognizing them to be a violation of their rights and liberties. On June 7, 2017 students **Moisés David Cáceres Velásquez, Sergio Luís Ulloa Rivera** and **Cesario Alejandro Félix Padilla** were convicted of trespassing, in a clear violation of the agreement. The UN Office in Honduras issued a statement emphasizing "its serious concern about the conviction."

In May 2017, Andy Johan Gómez Jerónimo and 19 other students were detained during a protest in which they occupied their university's administration building. They were charged with trespassing and deprivation of liberty. After the initial hearing, they were released on parole. In their second hearing on June 22, Roberto Antonio Gómez accompanied his son and protested the university's response to the students and the criminalization of their activities in defense of education rights.

We believe the killing of Roberto Antonio Gómez is related to his son's human rights work on behalf of students. We **strongly urge** that you

- publicly and immediately condemn the killing of Roberto Antonio Gómez
- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of Roberto Antonio Gómez, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of Andy Johan Gómez Jerónimo and other student activists
- immediately drop all charges against Andy Johan Gómez Jerónimo and all other students participating in protests as part of their legitimate and peaceful work in the defense of human rights
- immediately quash the sentences against Moisés David Cáceres Velásquez, Sergio Luís Ulloa Rivera and Cesario Alejandro Félix Padilla, in accordance with the agreement between UNAH and MEU
- refrain from using the justice system to intimidate, harass and discredit human rights defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator

copies: Jorge Alberto Milla Reyes, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
 Heide B. Fulton, Chargé d'Affaires, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037

Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email

James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax or email

Jose de Jesus Orozco Hernandez, Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email

US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline Defenders 6/30/2017_Honduras

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