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| via email: oaseguridad@hotmail.com, sedsdespachohn@gmail.com Sr. Julián Pacheco Tinoco Minister of Security of Honduras | via email: mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas Attorney General of Honduras |
| via email: comunicacionsdhjgd@gmail.com Sr. Héctor Leonel Ayala Alvarenga Minister of Human Rights, Justice, Interior and Decentralization | |

January 24, 2018

Dear Minister Pacheco, Minister Ayala, and Attorney General Chinchilla:

We are very disturbed by the serious **acts of repression against social activists and human rights defenders** who are monitoring and denouncing murder, smear campaigns, threats and intimidations in the aftermath of the November 29 disputed presidential elections. The Coalition against Impunity has registered at least 63 attacks against defenders since the post-election crisis started. These include:

December 16 2017 - The Broad Movement for Justice and Dignity (**MADJ**) reported that security forces brutally repressed a protest in La Masica in Atlántida Department. Security forces beat and later fired taser guns at approximately 10 people, including MADJ member **Diego Aguilar López** and **Wilmer Paredes**, a collaborator with MADJ.

December 30 2017 - **Father Ismael Moreno Coto**, director of the independent radio station *Radio Progreso* and the Reflection, Investigation, and Communication *Team (ERIC-SJ)* reported a smear campaign in which his name and picture, together with those of social activists **Karina Flores** and **Araminta Pereira** and six other defenders, were included in a flyer named "Axis of Evil" from El Progreso. They were accused of violence and of being involved in organized crime. In December, the National Protection System denied protection to ERIC-SJ's researcher **Joaquín Mejía**.

January 1 - Unknown assailants **shot and killed Wilmer Paredes**. On December 29 he had requested protection from the National Protection System for human rights defenders after he reported vehicles following him.

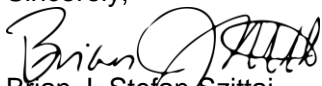
January 12 - Security forces harassed several journalists who were covering a protest in Tegucigalpa and violently forced them to leave the area. Two journalists from **UNE TV** were subsequently injured (cf our letter of Jan 22, 2018). According to the NGO C-Libre, another journalist from UNE TV has reported several security incidents since December, including death threats and tear gas thrown into her house at night

January 14 - a flyer began circulating on social media accusing MADJ's leaders, **Martín and Víctor Fernández**, of being responsible for Wilmer Paredes' murder.

We are appalled by these brutal acts of repression and **strongly urge** that you

- initiate a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the murder of Wilmer Paredes, and the injuries, threats, and smear campaigns reported by human rights defenders and organizations, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all appropriate measures to guarantee the safety of human rights defenders at risk, in accordance with their wishes.

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator


Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Nora Urbina, Director of the National Protection System, ~ via email
Marlon R. Tábora Muñoz, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via website or fax and US mail
Heide B. Fulton, Chargé d'Affaires, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via email
Jason Smith, Human Rights and Labor Representative, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via email
Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
Francisco José Eguiguren Praeli, Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, 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: