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July 26, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about recent attacks on journalists **Nincy Perdomo, Javier Edgardo Rodríguez, and Mai Ling Coto.**

On June 2, Nincy Perdomo, a journalist for the digital newspaper *The Pulse*, was outside the Presidential Building in Tegucigalpa, reporting on a mobilization of the Alliance of Opposition Against the Dictatorship. A police riot squad shot at her from a water tank, impacting her body with full, direct pressure.

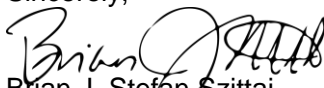
On the night of June 30 in Olanchito in Yoro Department, Javier Edgardo, correspondent for *TN5 news* and *Hoy Mismo*, was filming arrests at the police station. He noticed that his brother was among the arrestees, who were hurt and yelling that they had been beaten by police. His brother told him they were beaten because they had refused to be searched. Police then used force to conduct the searches and arrested them. Police immediately ordered Javier to turn off his camera and leave. When he refused, they forcefully pulled him away, but he continued filming. As the police car was leaving with the arrestees, Sub-Inspector Jorge Luis Salgado stormed out of the car, pressed Javier against the wall, broke his camera, and yelled at him, saying that it meant nothing to the police that Javier was a journalist. Four other police dragged Javier into a police cell where he was held from 8pm until 1am, when colleagues obtained his release. When the journalists told police that the arrest was illegal, police responded that they are the authority and will always have the power. On July 1 the Security Minister made a public statement blaming the arrest on disrespect for the authority.

On July 7, Mai Ling Coto, also a correspondent for *TN5 news* and *Hoy Mismo*, was assaulted by police while covering a police investigation in the Clavisquin neighborhood of Potrerillos municipality in Cortés Department. She (the only female in a group of several journalists) followed police officers into the neighborhood. Some police warned the reporters that they had no right to be there, but the reporters responded that they did have the right because there was no police tape in place. One police officer pulled Mai Ling Coto backwards and threw her to the ground. Police then forcibly removed the journalists from the street and cordoned off the area.

These attacks highlight the harassment, intimidation and violence from police that those working in the media experience in their daily work. We **strongly urge** that you

- adopt prevention mechanisms that protect media workers from state-sponsored violence
- provide training of public officials, especially the police and security forces and the adoption of guidelines on respect for freedom of expression.

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

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 US Embassy in Honduras: Heide B. Fulton (Chargé d'Affaires) and Jason Smith (Human Rights and Labor Representative) ~ via email  
 US State Department: Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk ~ via email  
 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Joel Hernández (Rapporteur for Honduras) and Edison Lanza (Freedom of Expression) ~ via email  
 US Congress: Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

C-Libre\_7/7/18\_Honduras

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

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