

via email: <a href="mailto:diseloalpresidente@presidencia.gob.hn">diseloalpresidente@presidencia.gob.hn</a> , <a href="mailto:info@presidencia.gob.hn">info@presidencia.gob.hn</a> <b>Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández</b> President of Honduras	via email: <a href="mailto:mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com">mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:oscarfernando@protonmail.ch">oscarfernando@protonmail.ch</a> <b>Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas</b> Attorney General of Honduras
---	---

September 22, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the attack on **Inmer Gerardo Chévez**, a journalist for the past fourteen years at Radio Progreso in El Progreso, Yoro Department.

On the morning of September 7, while covering a student protest, Inmer Gerardo Chévez asked the riot police not to hit a student they had taken. Two police sprayed the journalist in the face with pepper spray, which knocked him unconscious and melted his glasses. If he had not been wearing glasses, he might have been blinded.


According to Inmer Gerardo Chévez: "After the riot police captured one of the students, I told him, do not hit him. Seconds later they rushed me and sprayed me with pepper spray on my face. I felt my face catch fire, my eyes could not open, my chest burned. I felt like I was catching on fire...That happened about 11 in the morning and still at ten at night I could feel the burning in my arms and face."

Inmer Gerardo Chévez believes that the attack on him by police had been planned because police have previously attacked him while he was doing his journalistic work, in 2015, 2016, and 2017. He has filed complaints of these incidents with the Human Rights Prosecutor's Office, but he has not been made aware of any investigations.

We are quite concerned about the impunity with which the police and military act against journalists in Honduras. We strongly urge that you

- thoroughly and impartially investigate the attack against Inmer Gerardo Chévez Chévez, publish the results, and bring his assailants to justice;
- ensure the right of all journalists to exercise their profession safely.

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinators

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Roberto Herrera Cáceres, National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras ~ 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  
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email  
 US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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