

Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano
 National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras
 CONADEH: Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos
 Colonia Florencia Norte, Boulevard Suyapa, contiguo a Banco Lafice
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras

April 22, 2021

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre Lozano:

We are very concerned about the recent break-in by armed men on April 14 of the facilities of the Council for the Integral Development of Peasant Women (CODIMCA) in Tegucigalpa. When there was no response to their request for information about **Yasmin López**, the General Coordinator of CODIMCA, they tied up and beat two colleagues from the technical team, searched the offices, and took several computers containing confidential information.

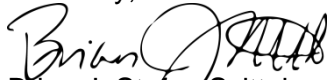
This attack occurred after CODIMCA and several other organizations filed an appeal in the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) against the dismissal of 22 of the 38 defendants in the Pandora case. This high-level corruption case involved the embezzlement of more than 280 million dollars that were legally allocated to agricultural projects to benefit rural communities living in poverty but were illegally diverted for use in financing the 2013 political campaigns. Other civil society organizations joined CODIMCA in filing the appeal, including the National Center of Rural Workers (CNTC), the Anti-Corruption Coalition, the Peoples' Justice Office, and the Center for the Study of Democracy (CESPAD).

We believe that the attack on CODIMCA members is an attempt to silence voices that denounce corruption and demand justice. This pattern of attacks on civil society organizations and human rights defenders is occurring in the current context of criminalization by the Honduran State of social protest, the right to association, and the free expression of ideas. The future of democracy in Honduras is threatened by these kinds of attacks.

We strongly urge that you

- conduct a thorough investigation into the attack on CODIMCA members, publish the results, and bring the perpetrators to justice
- take all means necessary to protect Yasmin López and all members of CODIMCA, in strict accordance with their wishes

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinators


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Lic. Rolando Edgardo Argueta Pérez, President of the Supreme Court of Justice ~ via email
 Lica. Karla Eugenia Cueva Aguilar, Secretary for Human Rights ~ via email
 Oscar Chinchilla Banegas, Attorney General ~ via email
 Luis Suazo Barahona, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via email and US mail
 Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail
 Isabel Albaladejo Escribano, Representative to Honduras of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH) ~ via email
 CODIMCA: Consejo para el Desarrollo Integral de la Mujer Campesina ~ via email
 CNTC: Central Nacional de Trabajadores del Campo ~ via email
 CESPAD: Centro de Estudio para la Democracia ~ via email
 Coalición Contra La Impunidad Honduras ~ via email
 HSN: Honduras Solidarity Network ~ via email
 US Embassy in Honduras: Colleen Hoey, Chargé d'Affaires; Nate Rettenmayer, Political Officer ~ via email
 US State Dept: Honduras Desk ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
 US Representatives Beatty, Gibbs, González, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

14 APR 2021_JM-Defensores_Honduras

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