

Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras	Lica. Karla Eugenia Cueva Aguilar Secretary for Human Rights of Honduras
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July 4, 2021

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Secretary Cueva:

We are deeply concerned over death threats to **Dr. Ligia Ramos**, the president of the Medical Association of the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS), a member of the Medical College of Honduras (CMH), a political candidate for the national legislature. It was reported in *El Libertador* newspaper on June 15 that the government had known for at least three weeks that there exist direct death threats on her life.


In August 2020, Dr. Ramos reported to the media that after five years of receiving death threats, she was also being harassed by the police. Dr. Ramos blames the president for her having to leave the country with her children to live in exile. Now expressing her desire to return to Honduras, despite the risk, Dr. Ramos is holding President Hernández responsible should anything happen to her. She said on national television that the orders for her assassination come from the government itself and that she has alerted international human rights organizations as well as the Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH) of the death threats.

Dr. Ligia Ramos is currently a candidate for deputy (representative) in the national legislature for the Salvador Party of Honduras (PSH), which is led by the engineer Salvador Nasralla Salum. Critical of the current administration of President Hernández, Dr. Ramos blames the government for the deaths of patients due to the abandonment of the public health system; the deficiencies of the public system have been highlighted during this COVID-19 crisis. If the government denies her personal protections, that denial will be seen by the international community not only as political but as directly interfering with the democratic electoral process. If she is denied protections while running for political office, any other political candidates who are critical of the Hernández government could also be at risk.

We urge that authorities in Honduras:

- carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the threats to the life of Dr. Ligia Ramos, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice
- implement the necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Dr. Ligia Ramos, in direct consultation with her
- protect the democratic process by working to immediately halt all threats and assassinations of political candidates, poll workers, and journalists, as have been well documented since the military coup in 2009.

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Hector Leonel Ayala, Minister of the Interior (Secretario de Gobernacion, Justicia, y Descentralizacion) ~ 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
 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 and US Representatives Beatty, Gibbs, González, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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