

<b>Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano</b> National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras	<b>Lica. Karla Eugenia Cueva Aguilar</b> Secretary for Human Rights of Honduras
---	--

September 26, 2021

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Secretary Cueva:

We are writing in protest of the verbal abuse and threats of violence that members of the Honduran press have received in recent weeks. On September 6, **Deyni Menjivar** was the target of such intimidation, and on August 31, **Hector Madrid** suffered the same treatment. These are just the latest in dozens of attacks against journalists, organizers and activists.

Deyni Menjivar was reporting for EDN TV from the site of a protest in San Pedro Sula where environmental defenders were demanding action against the construction of new upscale housing that is being built in the El Merendón forest reserve. As the filming was taking place, a man, who the journalist identified as a member of a private security company, interrupted her broadcast by using dynamite and demanded she stop reporting or else face “getting in trouble.”

Hector Madrid, who has been reporting on community opposition to the ZEDEs (Employment and Economic Development Zones), was followed by men in a white van two days in a row while leaving the broadcasting studio where he works for MultiTV in Choloma, Cortés Department. The second time this happened, one of the men shouted loudly that he’d better keep his mouth shut (about the ZEDEs) or be ready to take what was coming for him.

These are not isolated incidents, but instead part of a systemic attempt to silence the voices of those who stand up for environmental and social justice causes. It is illegal and disgraceful that the perpetrators of these threats continue with impunity.

**We strongly urge you to:**

- adopt and uphold prevention mechanisms to avoid violence against those who work in the media
- train public officials, especially the police and security forces, on the guidelines for conduct for respecting the rights of public assembly and respect for freedom of expression
- protect and respect the rights of all journalists in Honduras

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai

and

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

Co-Coordinators

copies: Oscar Chinchilla Banegas, Attorney General of Honduras ~ via email  
 Luis Suazo Barahona, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via email and US mail  
 Joel Hernández García, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail  
 Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, 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; Ariel Jahner, Human Rights Officer ~ via email  
 US State Department: Molly Runyon, Honduras Desk Officer ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email  
 US Representatives Beatty, Gibbs, González, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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