

Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras (CONADEH)	Rosa Seaman Vice-Minister for Protection Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH)
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January 12, 2022

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Vice-Minister Seaman:

We are writing to you today to express our grief and outrage at the tragic death of Indigenous human rights defender **Pablo Isabel Hernández**, age 34, who was assassinated this past Sunday January 9, just outside his home in the Tierra Colorada area of San Marcos de Caiquín municipality, Lempira Department. Unknown persons inflicted several gunshot wounds from the back about 800 meters from his home, where he lived with his wife and four small children.


As an environmental defender, Pablo Isabel Hernández served as president of La Red de Agroecologists of La Biosfera Cacique Lempira Señor de Las Montañas. As a Christian, he coordinated ecclesial base communities (comunidades de base). As a journalist, he directed the community radio RADIO TENÁN 94.1 FM “La voz indígena lenca”; he used the medium to regularly denounce human rights violations on his program “Voces Contra el Olvido.” As a community organizer, he led training programs to serve his community. As a person committed to democratic process, he served as a human rights observer for the November 28 election in San Marcos de Caiquín.

Pablo Isabel Hernández was a recognized Indigenous Lenca leader, as well as a political leader of the opposition since the 2009 coup, so he was a constant target of persecution. On repeated occasions he denounced threats against his life, filing the corresponding complaints, and requesting protection measures of which he was the beneficiary. His assassination demonstrates the failure of the state to implement adequate protection measures for human rights defenders like Pablo Isabel Hernández.

We urge you to:

- conduct a transparent investigation into the assassination of Pablo Isabel Hernández and hold those responsible accountable to the full extent of the law
- enact protections as guaranteed by law so that human rights defenders can carry out their work in safety and without fear of reprisal

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinators


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Luis Suazo Barahona, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via email and US mail
 Carlos Bernal Pulido, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail
 Pedro José Vaca Villarreal, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail
 Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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
 Alice Shackelford, UN Resident Coordinator in Honduras, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ 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, Brown, 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: