

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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June 14, 2022

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Vice-Minister Seaman:

We write to you today with both sadness and anger in our hearts over the continued violent attacks against members of the Honduran LGBTI community and their allies. Over the course of the past week, two more innocent people were murdered because of their sexual orientation: **Brayan Josué López** and **Suany Maradiaga**.

First, on June 5, police discovered the lifeless body of 29-year-old Brayan Josué López in a vacant lot in the outskirts of the Anonas neighborhood of San Pedro Sula, Cortés Department. He was an active member of Sampedrana Gay Community for Comprehensive Health and the Color Pink Unity Collective helping people with HIV-AIDS.

Then, on June 12, Suany Maradiaga, a 31-year-old transgender woman, was shot several times with a shotgun, also in San Pedro Sula. The assailants then ran over her with a vehicle. In 2021, Suany had filed and documented a complaint of discrimination, threats, physical and verbal aggression, but no action was ever taken by authorities to provide her the protection she sought. The inaction ultimately cost her life.


Violence against LGBTI people is occurring in other areas of Honduras as well. On May 26, family members of Deninson Escalante, coordinator of the Diverse Association of the South of Honduras, were victimized by the National Police at their home in the village of El Palenque, Choluteca Department. At 8:30pm, 30 police agents burst into the family home. When his parents, **Javier Escalante** and **Marilú Euceda**, demanded to see a court-ordered search warrant, the police responded by beating and threatening them and their other son **Rommel Escalante**. Also present was a seven-year-old grandson.

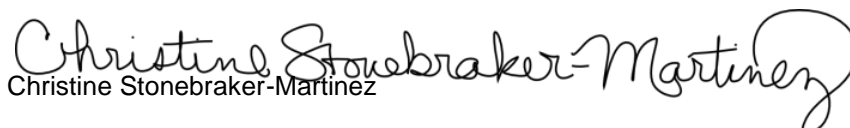
LGBTI defenders and their allies face particular risks of violence in Honduras. This year alone there have been at least 21 murders: 12 gay men, four lesbian women, and five transgender persons. The LGBTI rights organization Red Lésbica Cattrachas reports systemic violence within the judicial apparatus itself. A culture of anti-LGBTI bias in the Public Ministry allows such hate crimes to continue with impunity.

We strongly urge you to:

- conduct thorough and impartial investigations into the murders of Brayan Josué López and Suany Maradiaga and hold those responsible to account
- conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the police raid on the home of Deninson Escalante and hold those responsible to account
- provide technical assistance to implement sustainable structural measures to promote safe environments for LGBTI people and those who defend their human rights

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator


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
Roberta Clarke, Rapporteur on the Rights of LGTBI Persons, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email, 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
Red Lésbica Cattrachas/ Cattrachas Lesbian Network ~ via email
US Embassy in Honduras: Ambassador Laura F. Dogu and 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: