

<b>Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano</b> National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras (CONADEH)	<b>Rosa Seaman</b> Vice-Minister for Protection Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH)
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October 22, 2022

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Vice-Minister Seaman:

Journalist **Edwin Josué Andino Canaca**, age 23, was brutally murdered in Comayagüela, Francisco Morazán Department, on the morning of Monday, October 10. After being kidnapped from his home in the Villa Franca neighborhood of Comayagüela, his dead body was found on a street in the same neighborhood. He was wearing underwear, his mouth covered with adhesive tape. There were several gunshots to his face.

This was a double homicide. His father, **Edwin Emilio Andino Amador**, age 48, was also kidnapped from the same house. Witnesses reported that the journalist and his father were taken by force by several individuals in police clothing, driving in a vehicle similar to a police patrol car. Neighbors affirmed that when journalist Edwin Josué Andino Canaca was transferred to the vehicle, he shouted and asked his neighbors for help. Assuming that it was a legal detention by police, no one came to help him. His father Edwin Emilio Andino Amador was found murdered in the Policarpo Paz García neighborhood, about 15 kilometers away.


On October 18, police apprehended eight gang members as suspects, finding video of the murders on their mobile phones. Police say there is sufficient evidence to prove that at least three of the eight gang members are the material authors of the death of Edwin Andino and his father. Spokesman for the Police Investigations Directorate (DPI) Christian Nolasco affirmed that the mobile phones of the suspects not only show the murder of Edwin and his father, but also the murder of other people. The director of the National Police, Gustavo Sánchez, mentioned that there is sufficient technical and scientific evidence to determine that at least three captured gang members "are material authors of this double crime."

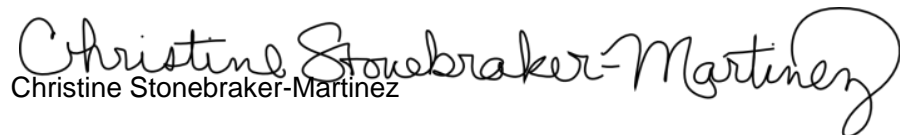
Edwin Josué Andino Canaca graduated with a degree in journalism from a private university in the capital and worked as a producer for the television channel LTV. This murder brings the total of journalists slain in Honduras this year to five, and the total number since 2001 to 98. The Public Ministry informed that of the total crimes against journalists, only 18 cases have been prosecuted.

We strongly urge you to:

- conduct a thorough and transparent investigation into the murders of Edwin Josué Andino Canaca and Edwin Emilio Andino Amador and not let it go unpunished
- create specific protocols for the investigation of the murders of journalists and social communicators, placing the main emphasis on the lines of investigation in these cases.
- protect freedom of expression by ensuring that journalists are able to do their reporting and express their opinions without fear of intimidation or reprisal

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Embassy of Honduras in Washington, DC c/o Alejandra Sandoval Taixes ~ via email and US mail  
 Carlos Pulido, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ via email and US mail  
 Pedro José Vaca Villarreal, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ~ 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  
 C-Libre: Comité por la Libre Expresión ~ via email  
 Natalie Southwick, Central & South America Program Coordinator, Committee to Protect Journalists ~ via email  
 US Embassy in Honduras: Ambassador Laura F. Dogu and Human Rights Officer ~ via email  
 US State Department: Bryan Schell, Honduras Desk Officer ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Brown, 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:**