

Blanca Saraí Izaguirre Lozano  
National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH)  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

January 25, 2024

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre Lozano:

We are saddened to learn of the assassination of journalist **Francisco Javier Ramírez Amador**, age 39. While on his way home in Danlí, El Paraíso Department, on the night of December 21, 2023, he was attacked by armed individuals along with a police officer. The police officer, who was assigned to him through the state security mechanism, was injured in the attack with two gunshots, but his initial condition was stable.

This was not the first violent attack on Francisco Javier Ramírez Amador. On May 3, 2023, he was shot three times by would-be assassins. He subsequently received protection measures from the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists of Honduras, as well as from the Directorate for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence. It is reported that he had a police escort and a temporary relocation outside of Danlí for at least six months. Last November, a request was made to increase the number of police escorts as part of his security scheme, but the authorities reportedly rejected the request due to lack of personnel.

Francisco Javier Ramírez Amador worked for Canal 24 in Danlí, where he covered matters of public interest such as police and judicial issues. During an onsite visit to Honduras in April 2023, representatives from the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights) were informed that the press in Danlí is facing a wave of aggressions, ranging from violence and threats by criminal groups that seek to impose news coverage on local media, to the closure of a channel by municipal ordinance for allegedly not paying taxes.

Journalists in Honduras carry out their work amid fear and self-censorship, and in a context of high risk and lack of protection by the authorities. We therefore urge that the government of Honduras:

- publish the results of the investigation into the murder of Francisco Javier Ramírez Amador and bring those responsible to justice
- strengthen the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists of Honduras by providing more technical support, administrative assistance, funding, and improved processes for risk analysis and evaluation
- ensure that all entities responsible for the implementation of prevention and protection measures work in a coordinated and articulated manner

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

  
Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Javier Efraín Bú Soto, Ambassador of Honduras in Washington, DC ~ via email and US mail  
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR): Rapporteurs Andrea Pochak (for Honduras), Pedro Vaca Villarreal (Freedom of Expression) ~ 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  
Sociedad Interamericana de la Prensa (SIP) ~ via email  
US Embassy in Tegucigalpa: Laura F. Dogu (ambassador) and Joe Duran, Human Rights Officer ~ via email  
US State Department: Bryan Schell, Honduras Desk Officer (Washington, DC)  
US Senators Brown & Vance ~ via email  
US Representatives Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Sykes ~ via email

09 DEC 2023\_ReportarSinMiedo\_Honduras

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