

# URGENT ACTION

## NEW THREATS AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN HONDURAS

**A Honduran journalist who received a death threat on 21 April has been followed by two men on a motorbike. Shots have also been fired outside his home. Another journalist has also told Amnesty International of death threats he has received in recent weeks.**

On the morning of 28 April, **Ricardo Oviedo**, a television journalist and President of the Association of Media workers of Colón (Asociación de Comunicadores de Colón) in northeastern Honduras, was followed as he drove from the office where he had attended a meeting by two men on a yellow motorbike without number plates. The same men have previously followed him home and have been seen circling around the area outside his house on a motorbike. Ricardo Oviedo was so alarmed that he stopped his motorbike and sought shelter in the office of an NGO, instead of continuing his journey. During the previous evening, shots were fired outside Ricardo Oviedo's home. He had received a death threat on 21 April (see previous UA).

Amnesty International has just received news of threats against another journalist. On 14 April, **Gerardo Chévez**, a reporter for radio station Radio Progreso, based in El Progreso municipality, northern Honduras, received a threat via text message (SMS). The threat referred to the killing the previous day of radio journalist Luis Antonio Chévez Hernández in the northern city of San Pedro Sula. It read "We're finishing off the Chevezes. Next we're going to start with the priests" ("Estamos acabando con los Chévez. Luego vamos con los curas"). Gerardo Chévez is not related to Luis Antonio Chévez Hernández, but shares the same family name. The director of Radio Progreso is a Jesuit priest, Padre Ismael Moreno. Gerardo Chévez had previously received a text message death threat on 29 March, which read: "Ha ha ha we're fucking up the journalists who talk shit like you" ("ja ja ja le estamos quebrando el culo a los periodistas a la mierda como vos"). Gerardo Chévez has recently reported on events organized by the opposition Resistance movement, and also on alleged local corruption.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language, urging the Honduran authorities to:**

- publicly condemn killings and intimidation of journalists and make a commitment to protect journalists;
- act immediately to provide all necessary protection to Ricardo Oviedo and Gerardo Chévez and other journalists under threat, in accordance with their wishes;
- carry out an urgent, thorough and impartial investigation into the killings of the six journalists and the threats made against other journalists, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- implement all of the orders for protection from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 JUNE 2010 TO:**

#### President

Sr. Porfirio Lobo Sosa  
 Presidente de la República  
 Casa Presidencial  
 Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo  
 Palacio José Cecilio del Valle  
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: + 504 232 1666**

**Salutation: Dear President**

#### Attorney General

Sr. Luis Alberto Rubí  
 Fiscal General de la República  
 Lomas del Guijarro, Avenida República  
 Dominicana  
 Edificio Lomas Plaza II  
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: + 504 221 5667**

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General**

#### **And copies to:**

#### NGO

Comité de Familiares de Detenidos  
 Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH)  
 Barrio La Plazuela, Avenida Cervantes,  
 Casa No. 1301  
 Apartado Postal 1243  
 Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS

**Fax:+504 220 5280 (say "tono de fax")**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Honduras accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 94/10 (AMR 37/007/2010). Further information: [www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR37/007/2010/en](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR37/007/2010/en)

**AMNESTY  
 INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## NEW THREATS AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN HONDURAS

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 1 March, Joseph Hernandez Ochoa, a 26-year-old student and journalist was shot dead in Tegucigalpa. He was the first victim in the recent spate of killings of journalists. His colleague, journalist Carol Cabrera, was injured in the same attack. On 11 March, radio journalist David Meza Montesinos was killed by unidentified assailants who had followed his car and shot him as he drove home. He had been investigating the issue of drug trafficking and had received threats by phone for several weeks. Three days later, Nahúm Palacios, news director for TV station Channel 5, was murdered while driving through the city of Tocoa, Colón department. He had investigated a land dispute in the Aguán region and had also reported on drug trafficking. On 24 July 2009, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had requested that Honduras immediately take steps to protect him, but the authorities took no action. Victor Manuel Juárez and Jose Bayardo Mairena both worked for the news programme *Así es Olancho* (This is Olancho) in Olancho department, eastern Honduras. They were shot from another vehicle on 27 March as they drove along a road in Olancho.

Following the *coup d'état* on 28 June 2009 there were closures and occupation of media outlets by military personnel, the beating and physical attack of journalists, and journalists, particularly those investigating organised criminal activity, human rights violations or speaking out about the *coup d'état*, have been subjected to threats and intimidation. Amnesty International documented violations during the *coup d'état* in a report released on 27 January 2010 titled "Honduras: Recommendations to the new Honduran government following the coup of June 2009" (Index: AMR 37/003/2010).

A new government led by Porfirio Lobo took office on 27 January 2010. Now, with six killings of journalists in just two months, the government must take urgent and immediate action to protect journalists receiving threats, prevent further deaths and investigate and bring to justice the culprits of these murders.

Further information on UA: 94/10 Index: AMR 37/008/2010 Issue Date: 30 April 2010

**AMNESTY**  
**INTERNATIONAL**

