

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AND FAMILY AT RISK

Honduran journalist and human rights defender Dina Meza has faced increasing harassment and intimidation in recent weeks. This harassment has also extended to a close family member. The safety of Dina and her family remains at risk.

Dina Meza has reported several incidents of harassment and intimidation against her since late May. She was followed by unknown individuals in Tegucigalpa, the capital, on 27 May, 5 June and most recently on 5 July while accompanied by a family member. On 5 June, she was walking towards the Morazán Boulevard in Tegucigalpa when an unknown individual on a motorcycle without license plates started following her. He took off the helmet he was wearing to show Dina Meza he was looking at her. She had to run to elude him. A week earlier, on 28 May at 9.05pm Dina Meza received a phone call by an unknown individual with a high-pitched voice on her mobile saying "I'm going to beat you up if you continue messing around" (*te voy a pegar una pijada si seguís jodiendo*). Only minutes before, Dina Meza had published some news relating to the murder of a political activist on her Facebook page.

On 25 June an unknown individual took pictures of a close family member who was meeting a friend in a public place. He approached Dina Meza's relative and showed the pictures he had taken. On 23 June Dina Meza was carrying out an interview in a public place when an unknown individual approached her and started taking pictures of her as well. Dina Meza has reported these incidents with the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights.

Award-winning journalist and human rights defender Dina Meza currently investigates and reports human rights violations in Honduras, in particular attacks against journalists and human rights defenders. She denounces human rights abuses nationally and internationally and accompanies victims in their search for justice.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to immediately and independently investigate the accusation of threats, harassment and intimidation against Dina Meza and her family, to make the results public and to bring those found responsible to justice;
- Expressing concern for the safety of Dina Meza and her family and calling on the authorities to provide effective protection to them in accordance with their wishes;
- Reminding the authorities in Honduras of their duty to guarantee that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of violence and threats, as established in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 AUGUST 2014 TO:

Minister of Interior
Sr. Arturo Corrales
Secretaría de Estado en el Despacho de
Seguridad
Aldea el Ocotal, Antiguo Local de la
Academia Nacional de Policía ANAPO
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Email: comunicacionCNDS@gmail.com
**Salutation: Dear Minister of Interior /
Señor Ministro del Interior**

Fiscal Especial de Derechos Humanos
Abogada Soraya Morales
Ministerio Público, Lomas del Guijarro
Avenida República Dominicana
Edificio Lomas Plaza II
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Fax: +504 2221 5667
Twitter: @MP_Honduras
**Salutation: Dear Special Prosecutor/
Señora Fiscal Especial**

And copies to:
Central America team
Amnesty International
Email: equipoca@amnesty.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Throughout her long career as a journalist and human rights defender, Dina Meza has been subjected to threats, harassment and intimidation on many occasions. In 2007, Dina Meza received Amnesty International UK's Special Award for Human Rights Journalism Under Threat for her journalism for the website Revistazo, which she carried out in spite of harassment and intimidation after investigating several private security firms for labour rights violations. In 2014 Dina Meza was also awarded the Oxfam Novib / PEN International Freedom of Expression Award.

Her case features in the regional report *Transforming Pain into Hope: Human Rights Defenders in the Americas*, published 7 December 2012 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR01/006/2012/en>) among the cases of human rights defenders that face death threats and attacks for their role in exposing human rights violations that would otherwise remain shrouded in secrecy.

Human rights defenders face high levels of risk in Honduras. According to the National Commissioner for Human Rights, 30 journalists and 70 lawyers have been killed in Honduras since January 2010. Among the dozens of cases of human rights violations and abuses committed against human rights defenders in the last five years, according to the information Amnesty International has received, in only one case were those responsible prosecuted, convicted and sentenced. For more information, see Amnesty International's Open letter to the presidential candidates of the Republic of Honduras (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR37/014/2013/en>).

In June 2014 the Honduran Congress discussed a first draft of a Law to Protect Journalists, Human Rights Defenders and Justice System workers (*Ley de Protección para los Defensores de Derechos Humanos, Periodistas, Comunicadores Sociales y Operadores de Justicia*). Given the context of violence against human rights defenders, journalists and justice system workers, it is absolutely crucial that the law is approved and implemented, and that adequate resources (including financial and human) are devoted to the task of establishing an effective protection mechanism.

Name: Dina Meza

Gender m/f: f

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