

# URGENT ACTION

## TWO HONDURAN ACTIVISTS RECEIVE DEATH THREAT

**Two human rights activists in the Lower Aguán region in Honduras received a death threat on 22 February.**

**Wilfredo Paz** is the spokesperson of the Permanent Observatory of Human Rights in the Aguán (Observatorio Permanente de Derechos Humanos del Aguán), a group that monitors human rights violations in the Aguán region. He is also a member of the National Front of Popular Resistance (Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular, FNRP). **Juan Chinchilla** is an activist with the group Campesino Unified Movement of Aguán (Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán, MUCA), campaigning for land rights of peasant farmers amid ongoing disputes over land ownership. The Observatory and MUCA have been working together on a number of initiatives, and were both involved in the organization of the International Meeting in Solidarity with the Aguán that took place from 17 to 20 February. The meeting drew substantial media attention to the human rights situation in the Aguán.

On the morning of 22 February, Wilfredo Paz received a threat by SMS, directed at Juan Chinchilla. The SMS said "Can you read well? Juan Chinchilla. Your name is on the list we're after your head. You're running things you shouldn't do, but we'll look for you in the same way you're looking for socialism" (*Lee bien? Juan Chinchilla. Tu nombre está en la lista buscamos tu cabeza. Estás ejecutando cosas que no debes de hacer, pero te vamos a buscar como tu buscas el socialismo*). Although Wilfredo Paz was not mentioned in the message, he also feels threatened as it was sent to his phone, and because he has received threats in the past. Neither Wilfredo Paz nor Juan Chinchilla reported the threat, due to a deep lack of trust in the authorities which has escalated in recent months due to forced evictions, arbitrary detention and harassment of human rights defenders by police.

Wilfredo Paz is a beneficiary of Precautionary Measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2009 due to concerns for his safety, which ensure that he receives adequate protection in accordance with his wishes. No action has been taken by the authorities to comply with Precautionary Measures. Juan Chinchilla was kidnapped in January 2011 by unknown men, and was ill-treated before managing to escape. The incident was immediately reported to the authorities, but to date no one has been held to account.

### **Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling for an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats against Wilfredo Paz and Juan Chinchilla, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- Urging the authorities to take immediate steps to provide appropriate protection to Wilfredo Paz and Juan Chinchilla, in accordance with their wishes.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 APRIL 2012 TO:**

#### 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 2221 5667

**Salutation: Sr. Fiscal General/ Dear  
Attorney General**

#### Minister for Justice and Human Rights

Ana Pineda  
Ministra de Justicia y Derechos Humanos  
Col. Lomas del Mayab,  
Ave. República de Costa Rica,  
Entre BAC-BAMER y BANHCAFE  
Tegucigalpa MDC, Honduras  
Email: [info@sjdh.gob.hn](mailto:info@sjdh.gob.hn)

**Salutation: Estimada Sra. Ministra/ Dear  
Minister**

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

#### NGO

Observatorio Permanente Internacional de  
Derechos Humanos en el Aguán  
Email: [oaporlaveda@yahoo.es](mailto:oaporlaveda@yahoo.es)

**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**



# URGENT ACTION

## TWO HONDURAN ACTIVISTS RECEIVE DEATH THREAT

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Lower Aguán region is at the centre of a series of land disputes between peasant farming communities and various companies and private landowners that have erupted into violent clashes. Since 2011, large numbers of military personnel have been deployed to the Aguán region amid concerns of unrest. There have been widespread reports by *campesino* groups that private security guards and military have targeted peasant communities. Forced evictions have been reportedly carried out by the security forces. For example Amnesty International issued an Urgent Action following the forced eviction of the community of Rigos in June 2011 (AMR 37/006/2011, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR37/006/2011/en>).

The Honduran government and peasant farmers' organisations, including MUCA, have been negotiating a solution to the conflict that would see the sale of the disputed lands from a private owner to the organizations with the mediation of the state. In February, a provisional agreement on land ownership was reached with some, but not all, of the communities. While the talks have been taking place in recent months, human rights organizations and activists in the area have been reporting harassment and intimidation against local community activists, both men and women, and unlawful killings.

Name: Juan Chinchilla, Wilfredo Paz

Gender m/f: Both male

UA: 66/12 Index: AMR 37/003/2012 Issue Date: 27 February 2012

**AMNESTY**  
**INTERNATIONAL**

