

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS JOURNALIST THREATENED

Dina Meza, a Honduran journalist and human rights activist, has received a series of threats of sexual violence against her in recent weeks. Her safety is at risk.

Dina Meza reports on human rights issues for the website Defenders Online (*Defensores en Línea*). She is also a human rights activist with the Committee of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared (Comité de Familiares de los Detenidos y Desaparecidos, COFADEH), a prominent human rights organization in Honduras.

On 14 April, Dina Meza received three silent calls to her mobile phone in the morning and afternoon from the same number. As she answered a fourth call, a male caller asked her "What's new?" ("*¿Qué hay de nuevo?*") and hung up. Dina Meza phoned back, asked the man who he was and what he wanted. The caller said his name was Miguel and claimed that he had dialled the wrong number, but ended the call by telling Dina "Look after your pussy ("*Cuidese la pipa*)").

A week earlier, on 6 April, Dina Meza was walking in her neighbourhood with her children when she noticed two men taking photos of them.

Weeks earlier, on 22 February, Dina Meza received two threats by text message with reference to sexual violence. The first text message said "We'll burn your pussy with lime until you scream and the whole squad will enjoy it [...] CAM ("*Les vamos a quemar con cal la pipa hasta q griten y luego toda la cuadrilla va gozar*" CAM). The second text message said "[...]You'll end up dead like people in the Aguán there's nothing better than fucking some bitches [...] *van a terminar como los del aguan muertos no hay nada mas rico q cojer a unas zorras*". CAM is an acronym for Comando Álvarez Martínez, a pseudonym which has been used in threats to human rights activists and journalists in the aftermath of the 2009 coup d'état.

Dina Meza is a beneficiary of Precaution Measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in 2006 and 2009 to safeguard her security. To date, the authorities have not implemented the orders.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling for an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats against Dina Meza, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- Urging that the authorities take immediate steps to fully comply with the IACHR orders. The form of protection provided to Dina Meza must be agreed with her and reflect her own wishes;
- Reminding the authorities that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 MAY 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 of Interior

Sr. Pompeyo Bonilla
Secretaría de Estado en el Despacho de
Seguridad, Plantel Casamata, subida al
Picacho, Tegucigalpa, M.D.C,
Honduras
Fax: +504 2220 1756

Salutation: Dear Minister / Estimado Sr. Ministro

And copies to:

Comité de Familiares de Detenidos
Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH)
Barrio La Plazuela, Avenida Cervantes
Casa No. 1301
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Fax: +504 2220 5280
(Ask "me da tono de fax, por favor")

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.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dina Meza is a well-known journalist and human rights defender. As part of COFADEH she has worked on the land conflict in the Lower Aguán region of Honduras. 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. In March Dina participated in a session of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in Washington DC, regarding the human rights situation and legal framework in Honduras.

Comando Álvarez Martínez (CAM) is a pseudonym which has been used in threats to human rights activists and journalists in the aftermath of the 2009 coup d'état. Álvarez Martínez was a General in the Honduran armed forces between 1982 and 1984 at the time of grave human rights abuses, and has been linked by local human rights groups to paramilitary death squads in that period.

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 2006, Dina Meza and colleagues at online publication Revistazo.com and its publisher the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ), were subjected to a campaign of harassment and intimidation after investigating several private security firms for labour rights violations. ASJ lawyer Dionisio Díaz García, was shot dead in December 2006 while on his way to the Honduran Supreme Court to prepare for a related case taken up by the organization. The investigation and trials on Dionisio Díaz García's case were carried out from 2007 to 2009 and resulted in the sentencing of a former security guard, who had worked for SETECH, and a police officer for his killing.

In the months leading up to his murder, Dionisio Díaz García and Dina Meza were followed by unmarked cars. Dina Meza's children were followed home from school and personal, derogatory comments were posted about her on the Revistazo.com online message board. Amnesty International issued an urgent action on behalf of the ASJ, including Dina Meza who was at the time one of its members, in 2006 – Honduras: Fear for Safety/ Death Threats (AI Index AMR 37/007/2006). Several other Urgent Actions followed in 2007 on behalf of ASJ.

Dina Meza's case was also featured in the report "Persecution and resistance: the experience of human rights defenders in Guatemala and Honduras" (AI Index AMR 02/001/2007).

Human rights defenders and journalists in Honduras are at risk: they are threatened, attacked or killed because of their work, often exposing human rights violations. In January 2012, journalist Gilda Silvestrucci received telephone death threats. (UA 78/12 AMR 37/004/2012). In February, Wilfredo Paz and Juan Chinchilla, two human rights activists campaigning for land rights of peasant farmers amid ongoing disputes over land ownership in the Lower Aguan region, received a death threat by text message. (UA 66/12 AMR 37/003/2012). In March, journalist Mavis Ethel Cruz received a telephone death threat. (UA 28/12 AMR 37/002/2012).

Name: Dina Meza
Gender m/f: F

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