

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER TORTURED

**On 23 October Karla Zelaya, a human rights defender working on land rights issues, was abducted in Tegucigalpa, Honduras and held for three hours. The men who abducted her tortured and threatened her while they interrogated her about her work.**

On 23 October **Karla Zelaya**, a journalist with the Unified Campesino Movement of Aguán (Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán, MUCA), was abducted from a bus stop in Tegucigalpa at 6.30am by two men who forced her into the back of a car. As the car pulled away, the two men, who got in the back of the car with Karla Zelaya, told her to cooperate and interrogated her about MUCA leaders, including Jhony Rivas. They blindfolded her and began to ask her more questions, while scratching her with a sharp object on her chest and stomach. They spoke about killing MUCA leaders and told Karla Zelaya they knew her routine and where her family lives. They said "You open your mouth too much, and we've warned you in the messages but you haven't wanted to listen, so today's your day" (*"Es que vos abris más de la cuenta la boca, y te hemos advertido por mensajes y no has querido hacer caso, entonces hoy es tu día"*). The men eventually let Karla Zelaya go after three hours, telling her: "Whenever we want we're going to come looking for you and you're going to give us the information we need" (*"En cualquier momento te vamos a buscar y nos vas a dar la información que necesitamos"*). She has filed a complaint with the authorities.

On the evening of 21 October Karla Zelaya had received three text messages and the next evening she received three more. One of the threats read "I'm getting tired of you aren't you scared of dying bitch I'm going to kill you" (*"Ya me estas cansando no te da miedo morir perra te voy a matar"*). Karla Zelaya had received death threats and silent phone calls in August and September this year.

MUCA is a movement campaigning for the land rights of peasant farmers, amid ongoing disputes over land ownership in the Aguán region, north east Honduras.

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

- Calling for an urgent investigation into the abduction and torture of Karla Zelaya and urging those responsible to be brought to justice;
- Asking the authorities to make public what progress has been made in the investigation into the threats received by Karla Zelaya in August and September 2012, and to bring those responsible for the threats to justice;
- Urging that the authorities take immediate action to provide appropriate protection to Karla Zelaya, in accordance with her wishes.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 DECEMBER 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, 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

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 292/12. Further information:  
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR37/012/2012/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In February 2012, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders – following a visit to Honduras – said that human rights defenders continue to suffer death threats, attacks, harassment and stigmatization and urged the authorities to urgently establish a protection programme for defenders.

On 22 September, human rights lawyer Antonio Trejo Cabrera was killed in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. Antonio Trejo Cabrera was a lawyer for three peasant cooperatives that are embroiled in a complex land-rights dispute in Bajo Aguán, a fertile valley in the north of the country. He had helped farmers to regain legal rights to land in the valley and was due to travel to Washington, D.C. in October to take part in hearings at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the ongoing land dispute. Antonio Trejo Cabrera had reported receiving death threats linked to his work representing the victims of human rights abuses in the Bajo Aguán region.

In recent years, thousands of landless rural workers occupied land whose ownership is disputed by wealthy landowners and corporations. Legal battles have been waged for over a decade, with decisions being set down, appealed and multiple forced evictions being carried out.

See Amnesty International news story at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/honduras-killing-human-rights-lawyer-sows-fear-2012-09-25>.

Name: Karla Zelaya  
Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 292/12 Index: AMR 37/013/2012 Issue Date: 25 October 2012