

PUBLIC

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20 December 2006

Further Information on UA 329/06 (AMR 37/007/2006, 8 December 2006) – Fear for Safety/Death Threats

HONDURAS

**Carlos Hernández (m), President of human rights NGO *Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ), Association for a More Just Society*
Dina Meza (f), ASJ Project Director and investigative journalist
Robert Marín García (m), ASJ investigative journalist
Claudia Mendoza (f), ASJ investigative journalist
Rosa Morazán (f), ASJ investigative journalist**

Killed: Dionisio Díaz García (m), ASJ lawyer and adviser to the journalism team

ASJ members have been intimidated again, and the government is making very slow progress in providing them with protection. The lives of ASJ members, particularly Carlos Hernández, remain in grave danger.

At around 9pm on 18 December a man on a motorbike parked up at the back of Carlos Hernández's house, and remained there long enough for neighbours to become suspicious before finally driving off. This follows an incident five days earlier, when two men on a motorbike had reportedly been seen in the neighbourhood where Carlos Hernández lives, asking for his address. A week before this, on 7 December, Carlos Hernández had been followed by a man on a motorbike, and only managed to evade him after two hours.

On 15 December sources linked to military intelligence told Robert Marín García of an apparent plan by private security firms to assassinate ASJ members, to be carried out this month. The source reportedly warned that ASJ journalists should be careful because *les llevan hambre* ("you're making them want to kill you"), and implied that they should leave the country for their own safety.

Dionisio Díaz García, a lawyer working for the ASJ, was shot dead on 4 December by a man riding pillion on a motorbike. Dionisio had been representing a number of former security guards who claimed to have been unfairly dismissed at the time he was killed. Amnesty International is concerned to note that the pattern of intimidation suffered by Carlos Hernández appears very similar to that experienced by Dionisio Díaz before he was killed. Like Carlos Hernández, Diaz had reported having been followed and receiving a threatening text message written in English.

Amnesty International is concerned at the lack of urgency in the Honduran government's response. Although the Ministry of Public Security and the Attorney General's office are apparently very close to taking action, the ASJ is still waiting for protective measures to be implemented, more than two weeks after Dionisio Díaz García's murder.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern that Carlos Hernández has suffered further intimidation;
- asking that the authorities take immediate and visible action to provide effective protection for Carlos Hernández and other ASJ members and their families, in accordance with their own wishes;
- urging the authorities to order a thorough and independent investigation into the murder of Dionisio Díaz García and the threats against other members of the ASJ, and to bring those responsible to justice;

- reminding the authorities that they are obliged to recognize the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Honduran Republic

Manuel Zelaya

Presidente de la República de Honduras

Casa Presidencial

Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo

Palacio José Cecilio del Valle

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Fax: +504 235 7700

Salutation: Dear President/Estimado Señor Presidente

Public Security Minister

Álvaro Romero

Minister of Public Security

Ministry of Public Security

Edificio Pujol, 4to. Piso, Col. Plamira (Blvd. Morazán)

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Fax: +504 220 4352

Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimado Sr. Ministro

Attorney General

Leónidas Rosa Bautista

Fiscal General del Estado

Ministerio Público

Lomas del Guijarro, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Fax: +504 221 5667

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Estimado Sr. Fiscal General

COPIES TO:

Foreign Minister

Milton Jiménez Puerto

Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

Colonia Miraflores, Boulevard de las Fuerzas Armadas

Contiguo al Palacio de Justicia, Edificio Antigua Casa Presidencial, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Fax: +504 234 1922

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Human rights NGO

Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ)

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and to diplomatic representatives of Honduras accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 January 2007.