

URGENT ACTION

HONDURAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AT RISK

Human rights defender Alexander David Sánchez Álvarez was threatened by unknown individuals using pistols on two occasions in the last week. Amnesty International believes that he has been targeted because of his human rights work on behalf of LGBT persons, and that his life is at risk.

On 14 January **Alex David Sánchez Álvarez**, a nurse and LGBT rights activist was standing with fellow LGBT activists outside the office of the Colectivo Violeta, an LGBT organisation, when a white car with the number plate PCC1964 pulled up. A man got out and walked towards Alex and took out a pistol. He pointed the pistol at Alex and his friend and said “Ustedes nos faltan” (“You are the ones we are missing”). They reported the incident to the local police.

On 19 January, Alex David Sánchez Álvarez was walking to work at the Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de las Víctimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares (Centre for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and their Families, CPTRT) where he works as a nurse. As he crossed the road just two and half blocks away from the office a motorbike pulled up with two men on the back of it. As they drove past, one of the men struck Alex across the face with a pistol, leaving a mark just below his right eye. The two men then drove off at speed. Alex reported the incident to the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights the same day. No protection has been offered to Alex, despite concerns for his safety.

Alex David Sánchez Álvarez has been very active in the LGBT community, working and volunteering for a number of LGBT and human rights organisations. He has also participated in protests against the *coup d'état* of 28 June 2009.

According to local organisations, since 7 January alone, 3 persons belonging to the LGBT community have been killed. The murders of at least 11 LGBT persons were documented by Honduran NGOs last year. On 20 January 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) stated it is “deeply concerned about serious threats, acts of violence and murders against members of the transgender community in Honduras, in particular the rising number of killings of members of the LGBT community”. In December 2009 LGBT activist Walter Trochez was murdered following repeated threats and surviving a previous attempt on his life.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- calling for an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats made against Alex David Sánchez Álvarez, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging that the authorities take immediate steps to fully provide appropriate protection to Alex David Sánchez Álvarez in accordance with his 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 2 MARCH 2011 TO:

Minister for Justice and Human

Rights

Ana Pineda

Ministra de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Casa Presidencial

Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo

Palacio José Cecilio del Valle

Tegucigalpa, M.D.C.

Honduras Fax: +504 2290 5129

Salutation: Estimada Sra. Ministra

Attorney General

Sr. Luis Alberto Rubí

Fiscal General de la República

Lomas del Guijarro, Avenida

República Dominicana

Edificio Lomas Plaza II

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Fax: + 504 221 5667

Salutation: Dear Attorney

General

And copies to:

NGO

Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y

Rehabilitación de las Víctimas de

Torturas y sus Familiares (CPTRT)

Colonia Palmira, Avenida República

de Brasil, Casa #2340

E-mail: cptrt@cablecolor.hn

Fax: + 504 22367273

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International in its 2010 report on Honduras highlighted the sharp rise in the number of killings of transgender women following the June 2009 coup. Between 2003 and March 2009, human rights organizations had registered 17 cases of killings of transgender women. Between the end of June and December 2009, 12 such cases were reported by local human rights organizations. No data was available at the time about investigations into these killings.

In a case documented by Amnesty International, in December 2009, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender human rights activist Walter Trochez was murdered in Tegucigalpa. Nine days earlier, he had escaped after being abducted by several masked men demanding the names and addresses of members of the movement opposing the *coup d'état*. His captors reportedly told him they had orders to kill him. The investigations on this case have not brought to indictments or convictions.

In April 2010, Amnesty expressed its concern on the situation of LGBT people in Honduras in its Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review – Ninth Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council (AI Index: AMR 37/005/2010). The document is available at:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR37/005/2010/en/79e58f10-220d-40ff-ab81-464b56aa439b/amr370052010en.pdf>

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