

Testimony of Alexander Main  
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before the  
United States Congress  
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission  
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Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to present written testimony to the Lantos Human Rights Commission regarding the state of media freedom in Honduras. In my work as an analyst for the Center for Economic and Policy Research, I focus on political, economic, and social developments in Latin America and on the impact of U.S. policy throughout the Western Hemisphere. For the past three years, I have devoted a great deal of my professional life to monitoring and analyzing the human rights situation in Honduras. I have traveled to Honduras to speak to survivors, witnesses, experts, officials and analysts regarding abuses against such rights, including attacks on freedom of the press.

Over the past three years, Honduras has become one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a journalist. According to Reporters Without Borders, of the 29 journalist killings in Honduras in the past decade, 24 have occurred since the unconstitutional military coup d'état that removed democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya from office – at gunpoint – at the end of June 2009.<sup>1</sup> Numerous experts and analysts agree: this decline in journalists' safety and freedom of the press is due in large part to a break down in law and order, and a deterioration of institutions, following the coup. The immediate post-coup period - from July to November 2009 - saw a number of brazen assaults on the media, which included the murder of a radio correspondent, raids and shutting down of radio and television stations by Honduran military and police, threats, kidnappings, and other abuses. The pattern continued up to election day, November 29, 2009, when opposition broadcasters repeatedly had their signals jammed and a TV station, Channel 10, was bombed just days before the election – incidents condemned by the Organization of American States.<sup>2</sup> The Washington-based human rights organization Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) described "a climate of harassment, violence, and violation of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly" on election day.<sup>3</sup>

The coup government gave way to the administration of President Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo, winner of the elections managed by the coup government, but the attacks on the media did not stop. Since Lobo took office on January 27, 2010, 23 journalists have been murdered, according to international monitors.<sup>4</sup> Others continue to receive threats. Meanwhile, the Lobo government

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1 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist still fears for safety although suspect held for his attempted murder." July 20, 2012. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-radio-reporter-gunned-down-and-tv-13-07-2012,43022.html>] See Appendix.

2 Organization of American States, "Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression expresses its deep concern regarding the situation of freedom of expression in Honduras." Press Release, November 26, 2009. [<http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/expression/showarticle.asp?artID=774&IID=1>]

3 Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional, "CEJIL condena represión durante elecciones en Honduras." November 29, 2009. [<http://cejil.org/comunicados/cejil-condena-represion-durante-elecciones-en-honduras>]

4 See Appendix.

has taken no real steps to address these abuses. To date, it has failed to prosecute a single murder of a journalist. When two men, Marco Joel Álvarez Barahona and Mario Roberto Guevara were brought to court in connection with the murder of radio journalist David Meza Montesinos, for example, they were each released after only a single hearing.<sup>5</sup> The only journalist killing to receive significant attention from Honduran authorities in the form of notable steps to apprehend and indict alleged perpetrators appears to be that of Alfredo Villatoro, a pro-government reporter for radio station HRN and reportedly close to President Lobo.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the number of journalists killed and other attacks against media workers, senior government officials have downplayed the problem. Following a number of vicious attacks, murders, and kidnappings this spring, National Police spokesman Hector Iván Velásquez Mejía was asked what he would do to offer greater protection to journalists. He replied that journalists who are threatened should report the threats to the National Commissioner for Human Rights or the Office of Human Rights, and effectively blamed the victims, warning journalists to do their "job responsibly, professionally, without much emotion that threatens the rights of another person, to avoid the likely consequences of revenge." He added that "the press is suffering the problem suffered by most sectors. There are dead journalists because there are a large number of journalists as a part of the population."<sup>7</sup>

All of this has led the Committee to Protect Journalists to conclude that "The [Honduran] government's stance on media killings has worsened the situation. Authorities have minimized crimes against journalists and been slow and negligent in pursuing the culprits."<sup>8</sup>

Reports from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other organizations underscore that attacks on journalists in Honduras are part of a broader and even more disturbing pattern of abuse targeting vulnerable minority groups, or those who challenge Honduras' power structure in some way, most notably women, the LGBT community, African descendants, indigenous communities, and especially those who opposed the 2009 coup.<sup>9</sup>

Several media outlets and journalists known to have been highly critical of the 2009 coup have

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5 Reporters Without Borders, "Leading suspect cleared of killing journalist, "clean-up" of police announced ." November 2, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-leading-suspect-cleared-of-killing-02-11-2011,41328.html>]

6 John Otis, "Amid violence, lack of unity among Honduran journalists" CPJ Blog, June 12, 2012. [<http://cpj.org/blog/2012/06/amidst-violence-lack-of-unity-among-honduran-journ.php#more>]; Reporters Without Borders, "Unprecedented wave of arrests in radio journalist's murder." May 29, 2012.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-unprecedented-wave-of-arrests-in-29-05-2012,42685.html>]

7 *El Tiempo*, "Practicar periodismo responsable aconseja el portavoz de Seguridad." May 10, 2012.

[<http://www.tiempo.hn/index.php/honduras/10558-practicar-periodismo-responsable-aconseja-el-portavoz-de-seguridad>]

8 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Attacks on the Press in 2011: Honduras." February 29, 2012.

[<http://cpj.org/2012/02/attacks-on-the-press-in-2011-honduras.php>]

9 Amnesty International, "Annual Report 2012: Honduras." May 24, 2012.

[<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/honduras/report-2012>]; Human Rights Watch, "World Report 2012: Honduras." January 22, 2012. [<http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-chapter-honduras>]

suffered repeated attacks. Radio Uno, described by the Committee to Protect Journalists as “a cooperative AM station known for its outspoken criticism of the 2009 coup that ousted President Manuel Zelaya and for its investigations of corruption and irregularities of the current government of President Porfirio Lobo” has “often been the target of harassment and raids by the police and army since the coup,” according to Reporters Without Borders,<sup>10</sup> has been subject to various incidents of equipment sabotage, and was temporarily forced off the air on August 30, 2010.<sup>11</sup> Radio Uno journalist Medardo Flores was murdered on September 8, 2011.

The *La Tribuna* newspaper – which has also published articles critical of the 2009 coup – has also come under attack, with a gunman firing 10 shots into its offices on December 5, 2011, injuring a security guard, and general manager Manuel Acosta Medina having been shot and wounded four times on May 23, 2011.<sup>12</sup>

In 2011, Global Media Forum and Reporters Without Borders awarded Karla Rivas, news editor for the embattled Jesuit outlet Radio Progreso (which was occupied by Honduran troops the day of the coup) the Peter Mackler Award for Courageous and Ethical Journalism.<sup>13</sup> Reporters Without Borders noted in December 2010 that “the [Honduran] government has never complied with an IACHR order to provide protection for the staff of *Radio Progreso* and its director, Father Ismael Moreno.”<sup>14</sup> Journalists for TV Globo have been the target of repeated attacks and threats, including Julio Ernesto Alvarado, Mario Castro Rodríguez, Ivis Alvarado, Noel Flores and Uriel Rodríguez.

The Honduran military raided the Radio Globo station on the day of the coup, June 28, 2009, assaulted several Radio Globo journalists, and temporarily closed the station for “sedition”, and “spreading slander and insults against the honor of the fatherland,” thereby committing the offense of “violating public order and peace of the nation.”<sup>15</sup> Radio Globo nevertheless continued to air criticism of the coup. In the years since, Radio Globo journalists such as Gilda Carolina Silvestrucci have reported receiving threats.

Channel 36, Choluteca, has been the target of repeated attacks by Honduran authorities, including a bomb attack on September 12, 2009 by a group that calls itself the “Frente Armado Nacional General Álvarez Martínez,” in reference to a deceased senior military officer linked to

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10 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalist who supported ousted president becomes 15th killed in 18 months.” September 10, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-who-supported-ousted-10-09-2011,40964.html>]

11 COFADEH, “Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras.” July 20, 2012.

12 *La Tribuna*, “SIP condena asesinato de periodista y atentado contra LA TRIBUNA.” December 6, 2011 [<http://old.latribuna.hn/2011/12/06/sip-condena-asesinato-de-periodista-y-atentado-contra-la-tribuna/>]; Committee to Protect Journalists, “One media executive killed in Honduras, another wounded.” May 25, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/05/one-media-executive-killed-in-honduras-another-wou.php>]

13 Reporters Without Borders, “Karla Rivas Named 2011 Winner of Peter Mackler Award.” August 22, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-karla-rivas-named-2011-winner-of-22-08-2011,40816.html>]

14 Reporters Without Borders, “Opposition media criminalized, two journalists arrested while covering eviction.” December 17, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-opposition-media-criminalized-two-17-12-2010,39073.html>]

15 COFADEH, “Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras.” July 20, 2012.

paramilitary activity in the 1980s. Channel 36 journalists report ongoing, regular threats. Nevertheless, no one has been punished for these incidents.<sup>16</sup>

Hanging over all of these human rights violations is a cloud of impunity and corruption. Honduras' police are largely corrupt and are themselves allegedly implicated in numerous human rights abuses, according to Honduran human rights defenders.<sup>17</sup> Former Police Commissioner Maria Luisa Borjas, an outspoken critic of the police, famously announced in November 2012, "It's scarier to meet up with five police officers on the streets than five gang members." Alfredo Landaverde, another prominent critic of corruption and drug trafficking by the police, was assassinated on December 7, 2012. According to Marvin Ponce, vice president of the Honduran Congress, 40 percent of Honduran police are involved in organized crime.<sup>18</sup> There have been over 10,000 complaints against the Honduran state security forces since the coup, most of them since Lobo came into office, according to both the government itself and COFADEH (the Committee of Families of the Detained and Disappeared of Honduras). Impunity is "pervasive," the United Nations found in February, 2012.<sup>19</sup> The Honduran judicial system is largely dysfunctional, and interlaced with what the Minister of Defense calls "narcojudges." Former president Manuel Zelaya has said, "The police are the drug traffickers. If you fund the police, you fund the drug traffickers."<sup>20</sup>

Writing for the Committee to Protect Journalists, John Otis reported:

The climate is so intimidating that reporters told CPJ that they don't dare probe deeply into crucial issues like drug trafficking or government corruption. Many print reporters have removed their bylines from their stories. *Tiempo*, a San Pedro Sula-based daily newspaper that consistently criticizes the government, has shut down its investigative unit due to safety concerns.<sup>21</sup>

While the Honduran government has formed three successive review commissions since October to address corruption by state security forces and, most recently, the judiciary as well, none of them has produced significant results. The most recent commission still lacks an office

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16 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

17 Gustavo Veiga, "La impunidad es fuerte en Honduras." (Interview with Bertha Oliva). Defensores en Linea, March 20, 2012.

[[http://www.defensoresenlinea.com/cms/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1926:la-impunidad-es-fuerte-en-honduras&catid=37:mem-y-imp&Itemid=150](http://www.defensoresenlinea.com/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1926:la-impunidad-es-fuerte-en-honduras&catid=37:mem-y-imp&Itemid=150)]

18 Dana Frank, "Honduras: Which Side Is the US On?" *The Nation*, June 11, 2012. [<http://www.thenation.com/article/167994/honduras-which-side-us>]

19 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Statement of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya, on the conclusion of her official visit to Honduras." February 14, 2012.

[<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=11830&LangID=E>]

20 Dana Frank, "Honduras: Which Side Is the US On?" *The Nation*, June 11, 2012. [<http://www.thenation.com/article/167994/honduras-which-side-us>]

21 John Otis, "Amid violence, lack of unity among Honduran journalists" CPJ Blog, June 12, 2012. [<http://cpj.org/blog/2012/06/amidst-violence-lack-of-unity-among-honduran-journ.php#more>]

after four months. The current chief of the National Police, Juan Carlos "El Tigre" Bonilla, appointed May 21, 2012 and charged with cleaning up the police, was recently revealed to have allegedly led police death squads between 1998 and 2002, documented by a subsequent police investigation.<sup>22</sup>

The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) has repeatedly called on the Honduran government to provide police protection to threatened journalists, issuing some 400 such orders in 2009 and 2010.<sup>23</sup> United Nations human rights experts have also urged the Honduran government to protect threatened journalists.<sup>24</sup> Despite these repeated appeals, many of the journalists the IACHR wanted placed under protection were attacked and sometimes killed.<sup>25</sup> In some cases, the threatened journalists complained about their lack of police protection.

The Honduran authorities' inability, or unwillingness, to take action to hold rights abusers accountable – including from within their own ranks – and to deter such crimes from recurring, has led many members of the U.S. Congress, prominent media outlets such as the *Los Angeles Times*, and others to suggest that continued U.S. support for the Honduran police and military should be linked to demonstrated improvements in these areas.<sup>26</sup>

Attacks on journalists continue in both large urban areas, such as Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, and in more rural, provincial areas, such as in the Bajo Aguán valley, site of an intense land conflict between peasants and large land holders. Reporters and human rights monitors covering the violent conflict, which has resulted in some 60 killings as well as numerous reported rapes, burnings of buildings, threats, and other violence, have been especially vulnerable.<sup>27</sup> When Fausto Elio Hernández was killed in a vicious machete attack in March, 2012, for example, Reporters Without Borders linked the murder to the impunity in the region, the 2009 coup, and the ongoing land conflicts:

"This particularly foul murder is the latest example of the chaotic security situation in Honduras, marked by the still open wounds of the June 2009 coup, the current attempts

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22 Martha Mendoza, "New Honduras top cop once investigated in killings." AP, June 2, 2012. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/10267975>]; Dana Frank, "Honduras: Which Side Is the US On? *The Nation*, June 11, 2012. [<http://www.thenation.com/article/167994/honduras-which-side-us>]

23 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Nahúm Palacios Arteaga." [<http://cpj.org/killed/2010/nahum-palacios-arteaga.php>]

24 UN News Service, *UN human rights experts urge Honduran authorities to protect journalists*, May 10, 2010, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4bf0ef9617.html> [accessed 23 July 2012]

25 See, e.g. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, "IACHR DEPLORES MURDER OF JOURNALIST IN HONDURAS." March 16, 2010. [<http://www.cidh.oas.org/Comunicados/English/2010/31-10eng.htm>]

26 CNN, "U.S. legislators threaten aid cut to Honduras over deaths." March 14, 2012.

[<http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/14/world/americas/honduras-journalist-killings/index.html>]; *Los Angeles Times*, "Holding Honduras accountable." January 2, 2012. [<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jan/02/opinion/la-ed-honduras-20120102>]

27 Rights Action, "HONDURAS - MORE FORCED DISAPPEARANCES IN THE AGUAN." July 5, 2012 [<http://rightsaction.org/action-content/honduras-more-forced-disappearances-aguan>]

to purge the police and the violent land disputes that affect the department of Colón in particular.”<sup>28</sup>

In May 2012, Reporters Without Borders declared Miguel Facussé Barjum, head of the Dinant corporation that claims ownership of much of the disputed land, and one of Honduras’ most wealthy and powerful individuals, to be a “predator of press freedom.”<sup>29</sup> Reporters Without Borders has noted that in the Aguán Valley, “The small community radio stations that carry the local [campesino] movements’ message are the target of censorship of every kind.”<sup>30</sup>

When a Reporters Without Borders team visited La Voz de Zacate Grande, a community station operating in the Pacific-coast Gulf of Fonseca, where Facussé is hoping to develop major tourism projects, in June 2011, it found that the station – its journalists also the subject of frequent threats and attacks - was banned from the airwaves.<sup>31</sup> Honduran human rights watchdog COFADEH describes the station as having “suffered harassment, persecution, illegal detention of their broadcasters, militarization, police harassment and power outages.”<sup>32</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

Time and again, Honduran human rights defenders have stressed to us how important it is for our government, which provides critical assistance to Honduras, to strongly and publicly express its concern regarding human rights abuses and the lack of effective response on the part of Honduran authorities. The Obama administration should systematically denounce attacks on media workers, and call on Honduran authorities to investigate and prosecute these attacks, and to enact protective measures in favor of those facing threats. Furthermore, our government should clearly and publicly acknowledge that Honduras is one of the nations where media freedom is most at risk as a result of continued killings, violent attacks and acts of intimidation on a level currently unseen in the rest of the world. Unfortunately, Obama administration statements regarding media freedom in Honduras have been rare and far too discreet. For instance, a statement from President Obama on World Press Freedom Day this year referred to alleged attacks on media workers in several countries – including two Latin American countries – but failed to make any mention of Honduras. The voice of the U.S. carries great weight in Honduras, and it is incumbent upon us to use it to raise attention regarding the grave and intolerable threats to press freedom in a country with which we have had close ties for many decades.

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28 Reporters Without Borders, "Regional radio journalist murdered by assailant with machete." March 12, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html]

29 Reporters Without Borders, "Miguel Facussé Barjum." May 2, 2012. [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-miguel-facusse-barjum-02-05-2012,42452.html]

30 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats." March 2, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html]

31 Reporters Without Borders, "Community radio stations still denied access to air-waves." June 28, 2011. [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-community-radio-stations-still-28-06-2011,40537.html]

32 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

Our government provides critical funding and training to security forces in Honduras through direct appropriations to the Honduran government as well as indirect appropriations through mechanisms such as the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). This funding should be curtailed if attacks against journalists and other vulnerable sectors continue unabated and with impunity. It should be noted that many of those killed and facing threats and attacks have been critics of the government and of police corruption and it is therefore highly likely that government authorities are implicated in these heinous acts. The Honduran government should not be provided with a blank check to allow abuses to continue through unconditional funding of security forces. Instead, the Obama administration should make clear that continued funding should be predicated on the Honduran government taking strong, effective measures to combat attacks against the media as well as other vulnerable sectors.

### **Appendix: Incidents of Assaults on the Media Since the 2009 Coup**

Repression of independent journalism was important to the 2009 coup d'état's success. As the Committee to Protect Journalists described, "Honduran security forces shut down local broadcasters, blocked transmissions of international news networks, and briefly detained journalists in the aftermath of the coup."<sup>33</sup> Several brazen attacks on journalists and media outlets occurred simultaneous with the coup:

- Honduran authorities blocked broadcasts of international networks CNN and Telesur and raided and/or shut down many national and local television stations.<sup>34</sup> Telesur journalist Adriana Sivori reported that she and her colleagues were briefly detained and mistreated by Honduran soldiers.<sup>35</sup> Reuters reported that "the few television and radio stations still operating on Monday [June 29th] played tropical music or aired soap operas and cooking shows," and "made little reference to the demonstrations or international condemnation of the coup."<sup>36</sup>
- The Honduran military raided the Radio Globo station on the day of the coup, and assaulted three journalists (David Romero, Rudy Diaz and Martinez Lidieth), three technicians (Orlando Villatoro, Franklin Mejía and other unknown person) and station owner Alejandro Villatoro. The military temporarily closed down the station for "sedition" and "spreading slander and insults against the honor of the fatherland,"

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33 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduras must allow pro-Zelaya broadcasters to reopen." September 28, 2009. [<http://cpj.org/2009/09/honduras-must-allow-pro-zelaya-broadcasters-to-reopen.php#more>]

34 *El Mundo*, "Ejército hondureño congela medios de comunicación." June 29, 2009. [<http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/608234.html>]

35 CNN, "Police clash with demonstrators in Honduran capital." June 29, 2009. [[http://articles.cnn.com/2009-06-29/world/honduras.president.arrested\\_1\\_demonstrators-honduran-supreme-court-military-action?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2009-06-29/world/honduras.president.arrested_1_demonstrators-honduran-supreme-court-military-action?_s=PM:WORLD)]

36 Reuters, "Honduran army smothers media after coup." June 29, 2012. [<http://mobile.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSTRE55S5W120090629?src=RSS-TOP>]

thereby committing the offense of “violating public order and peace of the nation.”<sup>37</sup>

- Troops occupied the Radio Progreso station, beginning in the morning. The troops left after a large crowd surrounded the station.<sup>38</sup>
- Troops shot at the Radio Juticalpa station and attempted to seize its transmitter.<sup>39</sup>
- Honduran troops detained Channel 5 anchor Nahúm Palacios Arteaga and his family for several hours in June 2009. Palacios “opposed the 2009 military-backed coup that ousted President Manuel Zelaya, and he had turned the TV station into an openly opposition channel, his colleagues said,” CPJ stated.<sup>40</sup>
- The military prevented Eduardo Maldonado, a commentator on Channel 66, from broadcasting . Maldonado, opposed to the coup, went into hiding and his show was forced to stay off the air for days.<sup>41</sup>
- Channel 36, also opposed to the coup, was forced off the air for a week after the coup.<sup>42</sup>

This began a pattern which continued in the months before the elections. For example:

- July 3, 2009 - Gabriel Fino Noriega, correspondent of the national radio station Radio América and reporter for Radio Estelar was shot and killed in San Juan Pueblo, in the Caribbean coast province of Atlántida.<sup>43</sup>
- July 13, 2009 – 11 journalists for Venezuelan public television channels Venezolana de Televisión (VTV) and Telesur were detained, threatened and then forced to leave the country.<sup>44</sup>
- August 12, 2009 - Alfredo López, station manager of Garifuna (Afro-Honduran) radio station Faluma Bimetu, aka Radio Coco Dulce, was arrested by the military and police

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37 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

38 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

39 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

40 Committee to Protect Journalists, “Nahúm Palacios Arteaga.” [<http://cpj.org/killed/2010/nahum-palacios-arteaga.php>]

41 Juan Forero, "Honduran Media's Coverage of Crisis Criticized as One-Sided." Washington Post, July 9, 2009. [<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/09/AR2009070902820.html>]

42 Juan Forero, "Honduran Media's Coverage of Crisis Criticized as One-Sided." Washington Post, July 9, 2009. [<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/09/AR2009070902820.html>]

43 Reporters Without Borders, "Radio journalist killed in Caribbean coast town." July 6, 2009. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-radio-journalist-killed-in-06-07-2009,33716.html>]

44 Reporters Without Borders, "Eleven Venezuelan journalists held and forced to leave the country as the press “remains under curfew”." July 15, 2009. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-eleven-venezuelan-journalists-held-15-07-2009,33818.html>]

due to his participation in resistance to the coup.<sup>45</sup>

- September 28, 2009 – Honduran authorities raided and shut down Radio Globo and Canal 36 television, both known for being opposed to the coup, seizing equipment and assaulting two Guatemalan journalists covering the raids. The Honduran military and police acted under a decree suspending constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties for 45 days. The Committee to Protect Journalists noted that “Article 4 of the decree, authorizes the National Telecommunications Commission to suspend any broadcaster that “attacks peace or public order,” or that broadcasts messages that “offend the human dignity, officials, threatens the law or government resolutions.”<sup>46</sup>

Election day, November 29, 2009, saw attacks on journalists along with attacks on demonstrator and critics of elections overseen by the unelected coup government. Violent assaults on the media continued in the weeks leading up to Lobo’s inauguration:

- December 5, 2009 - Gunmen raided the offices of opposition online newspaper *El Libertador*, whose editor, Jhony Lagos, had been repeatedly threatened since the coup.<sup>47</sup>
- December 13, 2009 – Walter Tróchez, anti-coup activist, LGBT rights activist, and researcher and spokesman for the Center for Human Rights Research and Promotion (CIPRODEH) was shot to death by a passing motorist. He had previously been arrested, beaten and humiliated and then kidnapped in separate incidents following the coup.<sup>48</sup>
- December 28, 2009 - César Silva, a reporter for Radio Globo and Channel 36 who had documented post-coup repression by the police and military, was kidnapped by three men armed with guns who took him to a secret detention center and interrogated him for 24 hours, before leaving him on the street.<sup>49</sup>
- January 6, 2010 – Garifuna (Afro-Honduran) radio station Faluma Bimetu, aka Radio Coco Dulce, was ransacked and then destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>50</sup>

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45 Reporters Without Borders, "In new wave of violence against media, de facto regime “reaps what it sowed”." August 17, 2009. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-in-new-wave-of-violence-against-17-08-2009,34216.html>]

46 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduras must allow pro-Zelaya broadcasters to reopen." September 28, 2009. [<http://cpj.org/2009/09/honduras-must-allow-pro-zelaya-broadcasters-to-reo.php#more>]

47 Reporters Without Borders, "Human rights and anti-coup activist gunned down on Tegucigalpa street." December 16, 2009. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-human-rights-and-anti-coup-16-12-2009,35351.html>]

48 Reporters Without Borders, "Human rights and anti-coup activist gunned down on Tegucigalpa street." December 16, 2009. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-human-rights-and-anti-coup-16-12-2009,35351.html>]

49 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

50 Reporters Without Borders, "Arson attack on community radio previously targeted by coup supporters." January 7, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-arson-attack-on-community-radio-07-01-2010,35968.html>]

Murders and other attacks on journalists have continued throughout the Lobo administration:

- March 1, 2010 - Journalist and host for Channel 51, Joseph Hernández Ochoa, and colleague Karol Cabrera were shot several times. Hernández died on the scene; Cabrera was injured but survived.<sup>51</sup>
- March 11, 2010 – Radio journalist David Meza Montesinos was gunned down in La Ceiba after receiving threats connected to his coverage of drug-trafficking on Honduras' Atlantic coast.<sup>52</sup>
- March 13, 2010 - Franklin Meléndez, director of the Voz de Zacate Grande community radio station in southern Valle province, was shot and injured by assailants who complained about his coverage of local land disputes. Meléndez reported that station staff received death threats at the station in the days following the shooting.<sup>53</sup>
- March 14, 2010 - Nahúm Palacios Arteaga, anchor for Channel 5 in the Aguán and well-known as an anti-coup journalist, was shot and killed along with his girlfriend, Dr. Yorleny Sánchez (she died from her injuries two weeks later). Honduran troops came to the station on the day of the coup, and threatened Palacios and detained him along with three other Channel 5 employees.<sup>54</sup> Following this and other incidents, the IACHR had ordered Honduran authorities to provide him protection.<sup>55</sup>
- March 26, 2010 – Local journalists Bayardo Mairena of Canal 4 TV, and Manuel Juárez, of Radio Excelsior, were ambushed and shot to death by gunmen in Olancho, eastern Honduras.<sup>56</sup> In a separate incident the same day in the western town of San Marcos de Ocotepeque, gunmen fired on the house of José Alemán, correspondent for Radio América and the *Diario Tiempo* newspaper and then pursued him in the streets. Alemán fled the country after police told him they would not be able to protect him.<sup>57</sup>

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51 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Joseph Hernández Ochoa." [<http://cpj.org/killed/2010/joseph-hernandez-ochoa.php>]

52 Reporters Without Borders, "Leading suspect cleared of killing journalist, "clean-up" of police announced ." November 2, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-leading-suspect-cleared-of-killing-02-11-2011,41328.html>]

53 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduran community radio director shot; staff threatened." March 14, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/03/honduran-community-radio-director-shot-staff-threa.php>]

54 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

55 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Nahúm Palacios Arteaga." [<http://cpj.org/killed/2010/nahum-palacios-arteaga.php>]

56 Reporters Without Borders, "Rule of law and civil liberties founder in year since coup." June 28, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-rule-of-law-and-civil-liberties-28-06-2010,37820.html>]

57 Reporters Without Borders, "Sixth journalist killed since start of year, robbery ruled out." April 13, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-month-of-violence-turns-honduras-02-04-2010,36850.html>]

- April 11, 2010 - Radio W105 presenter Luis Antonio Chévez Hernández was shot dead in San Pedro Sula.<sup>58</sup>
- April 20, 2010 - Honduran television anchor for Televisión de Honduras, Jorge Alberto Orellana was shot to death by an unidentified gunman in San Pedro Sula as he was leaving the station.<sup>59</sup>
- June 3, 2010 – On order of the Court of Amapala, department of Valle, at the request of the Attorney General of the Republic, some 300 soldiers and police raided and shut down La Voz de Zacate Grande 97.1 FM, a community radio station in the southern peninsula of Zacate Grande.<sup>60</sup>
- June 14, 2010 - Luis Arturo Mondragón Morazán, head of the Canal 19 TV station and producer of its “Teleprensa” TV news program was shot to death in the southern town of El Paraíso.<sup>61</sup>
- August 24, 2010 – The body of Israel Zelaya Díaz, Radio Internacional presenter and former *La Tribuna* reporter, based in San Pedro Sula, was found on the roadside, shot three times in the head.<sup>62</sup>
- September 16, 2010 – Honduran troops and police raided Radio Uno, beating and tear-gassing journalists inside.<sup>63</sup>
- December 15, 2010 - Elba Yolibeth Rubio and Elia Xiomara Hernández, two reporters for community radio La Voz de Zacate Grande, were arrested, despite identifying themselves as reporters, while covering a family’s eviction from land on the southern island of Zacate Grande by police and marines.<sup>64</sup>
- December 28, 2010 - Henry Suazo, reporter for Tegucigalpa-based radio HRN in La Ceiba and local TV station Cablevisión del Atlántico, in the north coast department of

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58 Reporters Without Borders, "Sixth journalist killed since start of year, robbery ruled out." April 13, 2010.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-month-of-violence-turns-honduras-02-04-2010,36850.html>]

59 Committee to Protect Journalists, "TV host slain; 6th Honduran journalist killed since March." April 21, 2010.

[<http://cpj.org/2010/04/tv-host-murdered-6th-honduran-journalist-killed-si.php>]

60 Reporters Without Borders, "300 soldiers and police storm community radio in continuing coup against media."

June 4, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-300-soldiers-and-police-storm-04-06-2010,37673.html>]; COFADEH,

"Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

61 Reporters Without Borders, "Another journalist gunned down, eighth since start of 2010." June 16, 2010.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-journalist-gunned-down-16-06-2010,37748.html>]

62 Reporters Without Borders, "Another journalist killed, ninth this year, motive not yet known." August 25, 2010.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-journalist-killed-ninth-25-08-2010,38201.html>]

63 COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

64 Reporters Without Borders, "Opposition media criminalized, two journalists arrested while covering eviction."

December 17, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-opposition-media-criminalized-two-17-12-2010,39073.html>]

Atlántida, was shot to death.<sup>65</sup>

- January 5, 2011 - Esdras López, of Canal 36-Cholusat, a TV station critical of the coup, was reportedly threatened by an army lieutenant-colonel "Méndez," who also photographed him.<sup>66</sup>
- January 26, 2011 - Radio Coco Dulce, Garifuna (Afro-Honduran) community radio station in Triunfo de la Cruz, in the Atlantic coast municipality of Tela, resumed broadcasting after being forced off the air for 12 days by threats from local authorities and security forces.<sup>67</sup>
- March 13, 2011 - Franklin Meléndez, head of community radio station La Voz de Zacate Grande, was shot and wounded by a man who identified himself as an ally of businessman Miguel Facussé Barjum.<sup>68</sup>
- March 28, 2011 - Miriam Miranda, president of the Fraternal Black Organization of Honduras, which created Radio Faluma Bimetu (Coco Dulce), was beaten by police and soldiers, arrested, held for 12 hours and charged with sedition.<sup>69</sup>
- March 31, 2011 - Radio Progreso journalist Pedro López was arrested and held for four hours while covering a protest against privatization of the education sector, fuel price increases and poor work conditions in garment factories.<sup>70</sup>
- April 7, 2011 – The home of Alfredo López, the head of Garifuna (Afro-Honduran) community radio station Radio Faluma Bimetu (Radio Coco Dulce), was torched in an arson attack.<sup>71</sup>
- April 16, 2011 - Pedro Canales, journalist with La Voz de Zacate Grande, discovered that his car had been sabotaged, and reported death threats and physical and judicial

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65 Reporters Without Borders, "Another journalist gunned down, tenth this year, motive not yet known." December 29, 2010. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-journalist-gunned-down-29-12-2010,39182.html>]

66 Reporters Without Borders, "Minister insists no journalist was murdered in connection with their work." January 6, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-minister-insists-no-journalist-was-06-01-2011,39230.html>]

67 Reporters Without Borders, "Resolution could threaten minority radio access to broadcast frequencies." February 3, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-afro-honduran-community-radio-01-02-2011,39450.html>]; Reporters Without Borders, "Restrictions imposed in absence of any guilty finding ." January 20, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-torched-radio-station-forced-off-18-01-2011,39344.html>]

68 Reporters Without Borders, "More attacks on opposition media in San Pedro Sula." May 9, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-attempted-attack-on-29-04-2011,40184.html>]

69 Reporters Without Borders, "Joint appeal for end to persecution of community and opposition media." April 1, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-joint-appeal-for-end-to-01-04-2011,39931.html>]

70 Reporters Without Borders, "Joint appeal for end to persecution of community and opposition media." April 1, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-joint-appeal-for-end-to-01-04-2011,39931.html>]

71 Reporters Without Borders, "More attacks on opposition media in San Pedro Sula." May 9, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-attempted-attack-on-29-04-2011,40184.html>]

harassment afterwards.<sup>72</sup>

- April 27, 2011 - Radio Uno Director Arnulfo Aguilar reported that a group of men armed with rifles and wearing ski masks stormed his house in San Pedro Sula as he was returning from work. He was able to scare the men off, but reported that police did not arrive until an hour after he phoned them, and that he generally was not provided the police protection the Honduran government is required to provide by order of the IACHR.<sup>73</sup>
- May 5, 2011 - Noel Flores and Uriel Rodríguez of Globo TV and Silvia Ardón of Radio Uno reportedly were harassed by police when they tried to find out what had happened to detained protesters.<sup>74</sup>
- May 6, 2011 - Globo TV cameraman Uriel Rodríguez sustained head and chest injuries at the hands of the police during student protests and his camera was destroyed. Police later attempted to arrest him at the hospital.<sup>75</sup>
- May 11, 2011 - Héctor Francisco Medina Polanco, producer and host of the TV9 news program for local cable company Omega Visión was shot and killed on May 11 in the northern province of Yoro by unknown assailants who followed him on a motorbike. Medina Polanco had reportedly covered corruption in the local mayor's office, and regional land disputes, and his brother claimed that Polanco had received prior threats.<sup>76</sup>
- May 20, 2011 – Three men armed with AK-47s shot and killed Luis Ernesto Mendoza Cerrato, owner of the Channel 24 television station.<sup>77</sup>
- May 23, 2011 - Gunmen shot and wounded Manuel Acosta Medina, general manager of Honduran newspaper *La Tribuna*. The gunmen fired 30 bullets into Acosta's car, hitting

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72 Reporters Without Borders, "More attacks on opposition media in San Pedro Sula." May 9, 2011.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-attempted-attack-on-29-04-2011,40184.html>]

73 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduran radio director ambushed by gunmen." April 29, 2011. [Honduran radio director ambushed by gunmen]; COFADEH, "Casos de periodistas bajo amenaza en Honduras." July 20, 2012.

74 Reporters Without Borders, "More attacks on opposition media in San Pedro Sula." May 9, 2011.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-attempted-attack-on-29-04-2011,40184.html>]

75 Reporters Without Borders, "More attacks on opposition media in San Pedro Sula." May 9, 2011.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-another-attempted-attack-on-29-04-2011,40184.html>]

76 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Provincial TV news host gunned down in Honduras." May 11, 2011.

[<http://cpj.org/2011/05/provincial-tv-new-host-gunned-down-in-honduras.php>]; Reporters Without Borders, "Local TV journalist gunned down in north, motive almost certainly linked to work." May 12, 2011.

[<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-local-tv-journalist-gunned-down-in-12-05-2011,40271.html>]

77 Committee to Protect Journalists, "One media executive killed in Honduras, another wounded." May 25, 2011.

[<http://cpj.org/2011/05/one-media-executive-killed-in-honduras-another-wou.php>]

Acosta four times.<sup>78</sup>

- July 4, 2011 - Adan Benítez, reporter for local TV stations 45TV and Teleceiba Canal 7 in the northern port city of La Ceiba, was shot in the head and killed by unknown assailants.<sup>79</sup>
- July 14, 2011 - Nery Jeremías Orellana, manager of *Radio Joconguera* in Candelaria, in the western department of Lempira, which works with civil society organizations and covers human rights issues, and also correspondent for Radio Progreso, was shot and killed.<sup>80</sup>
- In September 2011, Mario Castro Rodríguez, producer of “El Látigo contra la Corrupción” (Lashing Corruption) for Globo TV and supporter of the Broad Resistance Front, reported receiving some 100 death threats in two weeks.<sup>81</sup>
- September 8, 2011 - Medardo Flores, a Radio Uno journalist in San Pedro Sula, who supported former President Manuel Zelaya, was shot and killed.<sup>82</sup>
- September 22, 2011 - Edgardo Escoto, of Canal 13 TV’s program “Themes and Debates” was stopped by two men on motorbikes, armed with guns, who took his laptop computer. Escoto said the computer contained “confidential information about the coup that had been passed to me and other journalists several months ago...”<sup>83</sup>
- In November 2011, Arnulfo Aguilar, the head of Radio Uno in San Pedro Sula, and Luis Galdamez, program director at Tegucigalpa-based Radio Globo, both reported receiving threats and requested protection from the Honduran authorities.<sup>84</sup>
- November 9, 2011 - Gabriel Álvarez Padget, son of Televisión journalist Renato Álvarez, was threatened by individuals who put a gun to his head when he was leaving

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78 Committee to Protect Journalists, “One media executive killed in Honduras, another wounded.” May 25, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/05/one-media-executive-killed-in-honduras-another-wou.php>]

79 Reporters Without Borders, “La Ceiba TV reporter is second journalist murdered in Honduras in two months.” July 7, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-la-ceiba-tv-reporter-is-second-07-07-2011,40617.html>]

80 Reporters Without Borders, “Young radio station manager gunned down on eve of community radio station meeting.” July 15, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-young-radio-station-manager-gunned-15-07-2011,40642.html>]

81 Reporters Without Borders, “One opposition journalist threatened, another pursued by coup general.” September 26, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-one-opposition-journalist-26-09-2011,41054.html>]

82 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalist who supported ousted president becomes 15th killed in 18 months.” September 10, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-who-supported-ousted-10-09-2011,40964.html>]

83 Reporters Without Borders, “One opposition journalist threatened, another pursued by coup general.” September 26, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-one-opposition-journalist-26-09-2011,41054.html>]

84 Reporters Without Borders, “No real protection for opposition journalists from threats blamed on military.” November 15, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-no-real-protection-for-opposition-15-11-2011,41392.html>]

home.<sup>85</sup>

- November 20, 2011 - Unidentified assailants in a car followed a reporter for newspaper *La Tribuna* and fired at him. The attack followed *La Tribuna's* publication of reports in October linking local police to the murders of two university students, one of them the son of Julieta Castellanos, the rector of the National Autonomous University of Honduras.<sup>86</sup>
- December 5, 2011 – Gunmen fired on *La Tribuna's* offices, hitting security guard José Manuel Izaguirre three times.<sup>87</sup>
- December 6, 2011 - Luz Marina Paz Villalobos, host of the morning news program "3 en la noticia" on the Honduran News Network radio station and formerly a Radio Globo journalist, was shot and killed, along with her driver, Delmer Osmar Canales Gutiérrez.<sup>88</sup>
- December 13, 2011 - Journalists themselves took to the streets to protest the ongoing attacks and impunity. The "Journalism for life and free expression" demonstration against impunity was violently dispersed with tear gas and batons by the army and the presidential guard outside the presidential palace.<sup>89</sup> In the weeks following the demonstration, collective members Gilda Silvestrucci and Itsmania Pineda Platero reported receiving death threats.<sup>90</sup>
- January 6, 2012 - Independent journalist and head of the Xibalba human rights organization, Itsmania Pineda Platero reported receiving multiple death threats on her phone January 6, 8 and 9. Pineda walked at the head of the "Journalism for life and free

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85 Reporters Without Borders, "No real protection for opposition journalists from threats blamed on military." November 15, 2011. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-no-real-protection-for-opposition-15-11-2011,41392.html>]

86 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduran daily attacked by gunmen." December 5, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/12/honduran-daily-attacked-by-gunmen.php>]

87 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Honduran daily attacked by gunmen." December 5, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/12/honduran-daily-attacked-by-gunmen.php>]

88 Committee to Protect Journalists, "Radio journalist gunned down in Honduras." December 7, 2011. [<http://cpj.org/2011/12/radio-journalist-gunned-down-in-honduras.php>]; Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist killed, paper attacked as violence against media grows" December 8, 2011 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-killed-paper-attacked-08-12-2011,41532.html>]; ACAN-EFE, "Periodistas de Honduras condenan asesinato de colega Luz Marina Paz." December 6, 2011 [<http://old.latribuna.hn/2011/12/06/periodistas-de-honduras-condenan-asesinato-de-colega-luz-marina-paz/>]

89 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats." March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]; Reporters Without Borders, "'Journalism for life' demonstrator receives four death threats in three days" January 10, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-soldiers-use-clubs-to-disperse-14-12-2011,41548.html>]

90 Reporters Without Borders, "Women journalists terrorized, peasant spokesman gunned down in Aguán." January 24, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-women-journalists-terrorized-24-01-2012,41761.html>]

expression” march on December 13.<sup>91</sup>

- February 19, 2012 – Some 20 journalists in six vehicles present at the International Gathering for Human Rights in Honduras in Tocoa were intercepted by troops when they tried to determine the reason why the occupants of one of the other cars, being driven by a local peasant leader, had been detained. One of the journalists, Giorgio Trucchi, of Rel-UITA, said soldiers waved weapons in their direction.<sup>92</sup>
- February 22, 2012 – In the aftermath of the fire at Comayagua prison, which killed 361 people, journalists Luis Rodríguez and Javier Villalobos of local cable television station Catedral TV, who were investigating questions relating to prison authorities and guards’ behavior related to the fire, received a threatening message: “Stop talking about the fire or we will set fire to you!” Station owner Juan Ramón Flores, and Ramón Cabrera, manager of Digicable, the cable contractor for Catedral TV, reportedly received similar threats. In a separate, unrelated case, Canal local 32 program director and C-Libre vice-president Danilo Osmaro Castellanos reported receiving death threats against him and his family.<sup>93</sup>
- February 29, 2012 - Journalism student Saira Fabiola Almendares Borjas was found dead in Choloma. She had worked on programs on Canal 30 TV and Radio Cadena Voces. In an unrelated incident, San Pedro Sula-based Radio Libertad journalist Mavis Cruz reported that she and her family received death threats.<sup>94</sup>
- Also in February, Ivis Alvarado, program director of Globo TV and Radio Globo, targeted several times since the 2009 coup, reported the targeted theft of two computers from his home and that his car had been broken into.<sup>95</sup>
- On March 2, 2012, Reporters Without Borders wrote that “Not a day has passed since the start of the year in Honduras without a journalist, local media owner or social commentator receiving a phone call to say his or her life is in danger.”<sup>96</sup>

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91 Reporters Without Borders, ““Journalism for life” demonstrator receives four death threats in three days” January 10, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-soldiers-use-clubs-to-disperse-14-12-2011,41548.html>]

92 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats.” March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]

93 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats.” March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]

94 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats.” March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]

95 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats.” March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]

96 Reporters Without Borders, “Journalists and civil society activists caught up in new wave of threats.” March 2, 2012 [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html>]

- March 11, 2012 - Fausto Elio Hernández, presenter of news program “La Voz de la Noticia” on Radio Alegre de Colón, was hacked to death by a man armed with a machete in Sabá, Colón department.<sup>97</sup>
- April 14, 2012 - Journalist for the Defensores en Línea website and human rights activist Dina Meza reported receiving new threatening calls on her mobile phone.<sup>98</sup>
- April 23, 2012 - TV presenter Noel Valladares, host of “El show del Tecolote” on Canal 66 Maya TV, was gunned down in Tegucigalpa.<sup>99</sup>
- In April 2012, several journalists in the San Pedro Sula area came under attack. Canal 6 TV reporter Elder Joel Aguilar survived a submachine-gun attack by two men on the road between La Entrada, in Copán department, and San Pedro Sula. On April 26, 2012 - Canal 6 journalist Santiago Cerna received death threats on his mobile telephone, and the same day gunmen shot up the Omoa, Cortés department home of Selvín Martínez, correspondent for the station JBN Televisión.<sup>100</sup>
- May 5, 2012 – Journalist, anti-coup activist, LIBRE opposition party member and spokesman for Kukulcán, an organization that defends LGBT rights, Erick Martinez ‘s body was found dead, apparently from strangulation, in Guascalile, north of Tegucigalpa.<sup>101</sup>
- May 15, 2012 - Radio journalist Alfredo Villatoro of HRN, who had been kidnapped on his way to work, was found dead.<sup>102</sup>
- July 8, 2012 - Adonis Felipe Bueso Gutiérrez, a reporter for Christian radio station Radio Stereo Naranja, was shot dead with two of his cousins in Villanueva in the northern Cortés department.<sup>103</sup>

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97 Reporters Without Borders, "Regional radio journalist murdered by assailant with machete." March 12, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalists-and-civil-society-02-03-2012,41987.html]

98 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist and human rights activist Dina Meza threatened again." April 27, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-and-human-rights-27-04-2012,42392.html]

99 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist and human rights activist Dina Meza threatened again." April 27, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-and-human-rights-27-04-2012,42392.html]

100 Reporters Without Borders, "Attacks and threats aimed at provincial media reach alarming level." May 4, 2012 [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-attacks-and-threats-aimed-at-04-05-2012,42565.html]

101 BBC, "Missing Honduran journalist Erick Martinez found dead." May 8, 2012. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-17990638]

102 Reporters Without Borders, "Kidnapped radio journalist Alfredo Villatoro found shot dead." May 16, 2012. [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-journalist-and-rights-activist-09-05-2012,42590.html]

103 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist still fears for safety although suspect held for his attempted murder." July 20, 2012. [http://en.rsf.org/honduras-radio-reporter-gunned-down-and-tv-13-07-2012,43022.html]

- July 12, 2012 – JBN TV station reporter Selvín Martínez was shot at for the second time in less than two months, also in the Cortés department.<sup>104</sup>

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104 Reporters Without Borders, "Journalist still fears for safety although suspect held for his attempted murder." July 20, 2012. [<http://en.rsf.org/honduras-radio-reporter-gunned-down-and-tv-13-07-2012,43022.html>]