

# *Another Month in Honduras...*

## Human Rights Monitor – June 2022

Honduras commemorated the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coup d'état this month, for many the first time since the coup this took place under a legitimate government. While some important steps have been made to improve the situation, for example strengthening UFERCO which started an investigation into the ZEDEs, the legacy of the last 12 years still loom heavily over Honduras. Two more members of the LGBTQ+ community were murdered in June. The militarization of Honduras continues as the Xiomara administration failed to to disband the Military Police. They even started talks with Southcom to strengthen the Honduran Armed Forces. On a more positive note, David Castillo was finally sentenced for his role in the murder of Berta Cáceres and the Guapinol defenders had the charges officially dropped against them. Welcome to another month in Honduras.

In solidarity,

Daniel Langmeier

Honduras Forum Switzerland

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## Abbreviations

ASJ	Association for a More Just Society
ATIC	Technical Bureau for Criminal Investigation
BID	Inter-American Development Bank
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CDM	Center for Women's Rights
CIPRODEH	Center for Human Rights Research and Promotion
CMH	Medical Association Honduras
CNA	National Anti-Corruption Council
COFADEH	Committee of Families of the Detained-Disappeared in Honduras
COIPRODEN	Coordination of Private Institutions for Children's Rights
CONADEH	National Human Rights Commission
COPINH	Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras
FEPRODDHH	Special Public Prosecutor Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Operators
FOSDEH	Social Forum on the External Debt of Honduras
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IACtHR	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
ILO	International Labor Organization
ISHR	International Service for Human Rights
MACCIH	Support Mission against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras
MADJ	Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice
MP	Attorney General's Office
OACNUDH	UN Human Rights Office in Honduras
TSC	Supreme Audit Court
UFERCO	Special Prosecuting Unit against Corruption Networks
UNAH	National Autonomous University of Honduras
ZEDE	Zone for Employment and Economic Development

## Human Rights and Their Defenders

At the beginning of the month, PBI published a report on the human rights situation in Honduras.<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Watch sent an open letter to President Xiomara highlighting the need for reforms to provide greater protection for fundamental rights and the rule of law after "years of setbacks since the 2009 coup".<sup>2 3</sup>

### Attacks, Criminalization and Harassment

"The human rights defender, Margarita Pineda, denounced a series of threats against her for the work she does in defense of the territory and the commons of the municipality of San José, department of La Paz. She was the general coordinator and secretary of minutes of the Independent Lenca Indigenous Movement of La Paz-Honduras (MILPAH) and currently leads the area of indigenous women of that organization, which since early 2011 has been fighting the battle to defend the community heritage, which is threatened by the hydroelectric company, Aurora I, which is owned by the nationalist deputy and former vice president of the National Congress, Gladis Aurora Lopez."<sup>4</sup>

ConexiHon reported on the successful legal campaign by C-Libre to stop the persecution of three MILPAH defenders. This just after last month, 22 MILPAH defenders had the criminalizing charges dropped against themselves using the Amnesty Law.<sup>5</sup> Radio Progreso denounced the criminalization of their correspondent Sonia Pérez and 30 more members of an indigenous Lenca council.<sup>6 7</sup>

"The Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice (MADJ) denounced a new attack against indigenous people of the Tolupán tribe of San Francisco Locomapa in the municipality of Yoro. According to the information detailed by MADJ, the aggressor would be the retired general, Filander Armijo Uclés, who had previously attacked the same tribe and was even condemned by the Honduran justice system for being responsible for dispossessing entire families of the Tolupán tribe of their lands and exiling them."<sup>8</sup>

On June 16, COFADEH successfully defended the criminalized student, Hery Yovani Flores Quiroz. The amnesty law was applied to his case and he was freed.<sup>9</sup> A week later, 17 campesines from the Aguán Valley had the criminalizing charges dropped against them.<sup>10</sup>

1 [https://pbi-honduras.org/sites/pbi-honduras.org/files/publications/Deconstruir\\_para\\_construir\\_Situacion\\_derechos\\_humanos\\_2022.pdf](https://pbi-honduras.org/sites/pbi-honduras.org/files/publications/Deconstruir_para_construir_Situacion_derechos_humanos_2022.pdf)

2 <https://confidencialhn.com/human-rights-watch-envia-carta-a-xiomara-castro-para-que-adopte-reformas-para-proteger-los-derechos-tras-golpe-de-estado/>

3 <https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2022/06/30/honduras-agenda-de-derechos-humanos-para-el-gobierno-de-la-presidenta-castro>

4 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/alertas/amenazas/1501-te-mandaremos-a-quitar-del-camino-asi-amenazan-a-defensora-de-los-ddhh-en-san-jose-la-paz>

5 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/dh/2001-finaliza-persecucion-judicial-contr-tres-miembros-de-milpah>

6 <https://twitter.com/RadioProgresoHN/status/1536757518248312832>

7 <https://criterio.hn/ministerio-publico-mantiene-en-firme-criminalizacion-contr-defensora-del-medio-ambiente/>

8 <https://criterio.hn/denuncian-a-militar-retirado-por-nuevo-ataque-contr-tribu-tolupan-en-yoro/>

9 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/cofadeh-logra-aplicacion-del-decreto-de-ammistia-a-favor-de-estudiante-criminalizado/>

10 <https://twitter.com/OACNUDHHN/status/1539784141104971776>

## Guapinol

After over three years of persecution, a court finally resolved the last matter to stop the criminalization of the Guapinol defenders Juan López, Leonel George, Reynaldo Domínguez, Marco Tulio Ramos and José Adaly Cedillo.<sup>11 12</sup>

## Indigenous Peoples

CESPAD and Civil Rights Defenders published a report on the situation of women Maya-Chortí defenders.<sup>13</sup>

On June 28, the MP accused evangelical priest Roy Santos for discrimination. He called indigenous people "satanic shamans".<sup>14</sup>

## FPIC

On June 1, Miriam Miranda denounced: "The ICF, with the financial support of the German Cooperation, intends to carry out today a supposed "consultation" on the management of protected areas in the community of Triunfo de la Cruz, Tela; they are unaware that there is a judgment of the Inter-American Court and that it must be complied with!"<sup>15 16</sup>

## The Case of Berta Cáceres

At the beginning of the month, "[m]embers of the Expert Observation Mission in the Berta Cáceres Case express their deep concern about the delay of justice in the case of the renowned Lenca leader Berta Cáceres in Honduras. A ruling declaring the criminal responsibility of Roberto David Castillo Mejia as co-perpetrator of the murder was issued on July 5, but the First Chamber of the Sentencing Court has not yet issued the sentence, further delaying the rights of the victims - including her family, the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) and Honduran society - to truth, justice and reparation".<sup>17</sup> Castillo's sentencing was supposed to be on June 13, but it was postponed for the fourth time.<sup>18 19</sup> As a consequence, EU Parliamentarians called for justice for Berta Cáceres "without any more delay".<sup>20</sup> OACNUDH also criticized the rescheduling.<sup>21</sup>

On June 20, David Castillo was finally sentenced for the assassination of Berta Cáceres - 22 years and six months in prison.<sup>22 23</sup> "Her youngest daughter, Laura Zúñiga Cáceres, welcomed the sentencing as another step in the fight for justice. "This is an important advance but the masterminds of the crime are still enjoying impunity thanks to their political and economic power.

11 <https://twitter.com/guapinolre/status/1539425601160880130>

12 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/component/k2/item/6146-sala-de-lo-constitucional-ordena-libertad-definitiva-para-otros-cinco-defensores-de-guapinol>

13 <https://cespad.org/hn/2022/06/19/sistematizacion-de-experiencias-del-encuentro-de-mujeres-maya-chorti/>

14 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/presentan-requerimiento-fiscal-contra-pastor-roy-santos-operacion-nemesis-vi-pueblos-indigenas-C18831501f>

15 <https://twitter.com/baraudawaguchu/status/1531998538841849863>

16 <https://twitter.com/ofraneh/status/1532138485175427078>

17 <https://www.observacionbertacaceres.org/post/failure-to-issue-sentence-in-bera-c%C3%A1ceres-case-denies-access-to-justice-for-victims>

18 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1536362757683134465>

19 <https://radioprogreso.hn/aplicacion-movil/por-cuarta-vez-reprograman-lectura-de-sentencia-contra-asesino-de-bera-caceres/>

20 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1537158126130053123>

21 <https://twitter.com/OACNUDH/status/1537568069618376706>

22 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1538996316352684039>

23 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/22-anos-seis-meses-de-reclusion-contra-presidente-de-desa-por-el-asesinato-de-bera-caceres/>

As victims of this crime, we, her family, members of Copinh and the Lenca people will continue demanding justice from the Honduran state.” (...) During last year’s 49-day trial, Daniel Atala Midence, Desa’s financial manager, was summoned to give evidence due to his role in running operations with Castillo – which included authorizing payments to informants used to monitor Cáceres. But Atala Midence was excused at the last minute after state prosecutors revealed that he was under investigation for the murder. No further information has been released but upon sentencing Castillo, the court ordered that the case files be kept under wraps as the investigation remains open.”<sup>24</sup>

In the Gualcarque Fraud case, COPINH informed that Jacobo Atala Zablah had been called to testify. COPINH had requested this. The hearing will take place between July 25 and August 19.<sup>25 26</sup> On June 21, COPINH's Berta Zúniga met with president Xiomara to discuss the situation of the Lenca people, the sentencing of David Castillo and the ongoing impunity in the case of the Atalas.<sup>27</sup> COPINH published a press release about the meeting."COPINH delivered a list of specific and concrete demands centered on three commitments: i) The commitment to advance in the process of justice for our colleague Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores, National Heroine, as well as for the Lenca community of Río Blanco. ii) The compromise to take immediate measures for the elimination of territorial conflicts and the reduction of inequality and poverty of the Lenca people organized in COPINH. iii) The compromise of the State of Honduras to recognize the rights to land, territories and rights of indigenous communities in the realization of regulatory, administrative and legal changes for the comprehensive protection of the rights of indigenous peoples.”<sup>28</sup>

At the end of the month, an article by Jared Olson brought to light new information about the murder of Berta and the role of international banks. "A trove of Dutch and U.S. legal and financial documents shared with The Intercept reveal, for the first time, the flow of international funding in the days leading up to March 2, 2016, when a hit squad broke into Cáceres' house and killed her. The bank provided the documents to two Dutch human rights lawyers, Wout Albers and Ron Rosenhart Rodriguez, who have spent the past two years representing Cáceres' family and COPINH, the organization she co-founded, in a civil lawsuit that seeks to hold FMO accountable for its role in the Agua Zarca project. (The suit was first filed in the Netherlands in 2018; Albers and Rosenhart came on in 2020.) In at least four instances, according to the records, the bank released funding to a company affiliated with Castillo and Atala that did not match the stated payee, routing the money through an offshore account with Deutsche Bank in New York City. (...) It was Atala who directed the \$1.7 million payment to the concrete company Concretos del Caribe S.A., or CONCASA, though another firm was listed as the intended recipient, the documents reveal. Hours after the loan landed, Castillo, in WhatsApp communications released by the Honduran public prosecutor and previously reported on by The Intercept, texted the head of the hit squad that payment was coming, because “the loan [we] requested is available.” It is not known whether

24 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/20/honduras-man-who-planned-bera-caceress-jailed-for-22-years>

25 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1534974580288282625>

26 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1535029698526433307>

27 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1539437372483436545>

28 <https://copinh.org/2022/06/copinh-presents-proposals-for-justice-for-bera-and-lenca-people-to-president-xiomara-castro/>

Castillo was referring to the loan proceeds sent to CONCASA. Less than 48 hours later, Berta Cáceres was dead."<sup>29</sup>

On June 28, “13 years after the 2009 coup d’état, COPINH, together with the daughters and son of Berta Cáceres, filed a criminal complaint with the Dutch Attorney General’s office against the Dutch bank, FMO, and its directors for the crimes of complicity in acts of corruption, embezzlement, money laundering and violence in their financing of the Agua Zarca Project of the Atala Zablah family. This legal action aims to unmask the criminal actions of the supposed “development” and “green” banks such as FMO, which with their money finance corruption, violence and the violation of human rights of indigenous communities by multimillionaire bankers such as the Atalas”.<sup>30 31</sup>

## LGBTQ

Mid-June, the Honduran government produced a radio spot in support of the LGBTQ+ community, but according to ConfidencialHN, this led to discussions inside the administration.<sup>32</sup> “The Secretary of Human Rights Natalie Roque assured that a radio spot, broadcast on the state-owned Radio Nacional de Honduras, on sexual diversity is an awareness campaign. She added that this announcement is in response to the sentence issued by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) for the murder of the sexual diversity activist, Vicky Hernández, which occurred in 2010.”<sup>33</sup> But after just one day, the spot was withdrawn after protest by some listeners and the church as well as business actors. Noticieros Hoy Mismo even reported that those responsible for the spot had been fired...<sup>34</sup>

## Assassinations

OACNUDH condemned the murder of the LGBTQI+ defender Brayan Josué López Guzmán on June 5 in San Pedro Sula.<sup>35</sup>

Another member of the LGBTQ+ community was murdered in Honduras, trans woman Suany Maradiaga violently lost her life on June 12. Previous to her death, she had denounced threats at the MP but was ignored.<sup>36</sup>

## Violence against Women

According to the Center for Women's Rights (CDM), 110 women violently lost their lives in the first four months of 2022.<sup>37</sup> The number of femicides had reached 130 by the end of May.<sup>38</sup>

29 <https://theintercept.com/2022/06/23/honduras-bertha-caceres-murder-money-trail/>

30 <https://copinh.org/2022/06/copinh-files-a-criminal-complaint-against-the-dutch-bank-fmo-for-complicity-in-corruption-embezzlement-money-laundering-and-violence/>

31 <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/family-slain-honduran-activist-seeks-criminal-probe-into-dutch-lender-2022-06-28/>

32 <https://confidencialhn.com/polemica-ha-generado-spot-de-radio-donde-una-nina-de-15-anos-confiesa-a-su-madre-ser-lesbiana/>

33 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/19/afirman-que-anuncio-sobre-diversidad-sexual-es-una-campana-de-sensibilizacion/>

34 <https://twitter.com/jeffgemst/status/1538730235205754880>

35 <https://oacnudh.hn/oacnudh-condena-el-asesinato-de-brayan-josue-lopez-guzman-defensor-de-los-derechos-humanos-de-las-personas-lgbti/>

36 <https://criterio.hn/ministerio-publico-invisibilizo-denuncia-de-mujer-trans-que-despues-fue-asesinada/>

37 <https://proceso.hn/ong-denuncia-el-asesinato-de-110-mujeres-en-honduras-entre-enero-y-abril/>

38 <https://criterio.hn/honduras-sin-combate-a-la-violencia-hacia-las-mujeres-hasta-mayo-contabilizan-130-femicidios/>

"About 3,159 women "broke the silence" and denounced before the National Commissioner of Human Rights (Conadeh) to be victims of violations and abuses, according to a report revealed this Friday by this state agency, regarding the human rights situation in the Central American country during 2021."<sup>39</sup> "Women and girls are daily victims of different types of sexual violence, some survive and others are murdered, the records on these cases are handled in a negligent manner by the MP and other entities, once again hindering justice and the correct way to establish this information for surveys. The Women's Human Rights Observatory (CDM), elaborated a bulletin on sexual violence against women and girls in 2021. To produce this document, CDM conducted interviews and requested data from different entities, including: the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP), Forensic Medicine (MF), the Ministry of Security, the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ), the Ministry of Health (SESAL) and the National Emergency System (911)."<sup>40</sup>

The Guardian reports on the harsh abortion ban in Honduras. "In Honduras, where more than 66% of the population lives in poverty, it is the poorest women who pay the highest price for the country's draconian abortion laws, among the strictest in the world. The state's control over women's reproductive health is almost absolute. Abortion in Honduras is illegal in all circumstances, including rape and incest. Abortions are not allowed to save a woman's life or when the fetus can't survive outside the womb. Emergency contraception – the morning-after pill – is also banned."<sup>41</sup>

## Protection Mechanism

Human rights defenders denounce that the protection mechanism for them is in a state of disarray. "Human rights defenders and journalists have expressed their discontent with the ineffectiveness of the Protection Mechanism. Víctor Fernández, a legal professional and human rights defender, told Criterio.hn that his impression and feeling as a beneficiary of protection measures is that this entity "does not work, or at least has not begun to work".<sup>42</sup>

## Extractive Industries

CESPAD published an article on how much of the extractive development model pushed by the JOH regime is left under the Xiomara administration.<sup>43</sup>

The Honduran government put a stop to the selling of carbon credits based on the Honduran forest.<sup>44</sup>

## Hydroelectricity

"On June 20 and 27, two of the most renowned Indigenous Lenca leaders from the Consejo Indígena Lenca de Reitoca, Wilmer Otoniel Alonzo, President of the Council, and Jose Orlando Rodas

39 <https://proceso.hn/mas-de-3-mil-mujeres-presentaron-denuncias-por-violacion-a-sus-derechos-el-ano-anterior-en-honduras/>

40 <https://criterio.hn/ministerio-publico-es-negligente-con-casos-de-violencia-sexual-y-asesinatos-de-mujeres/>

41 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/jun/30/i-couldnt-have-the-baby-honduras-poor-suffer-most-from-draconian-abortion-laws>

42 <https://criterio.hn/mecanismo-de-proteccion-para-defensores-en-honduras-esta-en-coma/>

43 <https://cespad.org.hn/2022/06/06/covuntura-desde-los-territorios-por-que-sigue-vigente-el-proyecto-extractivista-heredado-del-gobierno-de-juan-orlando-herandez-joh/>

44 <https://twitter.com/ofraneh/status/1542542757310390274>



Garcia, his brother-in-law, will face trial on charges of usurpation and damages. Their trial will be heard by Court of Letters of Francisco Morazán in the Supreme Court of Justice of Tegucigalpa. The malicious criminal case against the Indigenous Land Defenders goes back to October 2018 when hydroelectric company Promotora de Generación de Energía Limpia S.A (PROGELSA) filed a complaint at the Public Ministry against the pair in an attempt to repress the peaceful organizing of the wider Indigenous Lenca community of Reitoca, who were adamant to stop the illegal development of a dam project on the sacred Grande River in Lenca ancestral territory. PROGELSA was founded by Jack Arevalo Fuentes, the former Manager of the ENEE, who has long been associated with controversial hydroelectric projects in Honduras.<sup>45</sup> But on the trial date, the court postponed it. Their lawyers denounced that this means a prolongation of the defenders' ordeal until January 2023.<sup>46</sup> OACNUDH also expressed concern.<sup>47</sup>

## **ZEDES**

ZEDE Próspera authorities claim to have legal rights to stay in Honduras. "The technical secretary of the ZEDE Próspera, Jorge Colindres, affirmed in a morning television program that "the petrified articles" of the Constitution of the Republic "were never reformed". Somewhat annoyed, he asked and answered himself: "What articles were reformed? Articles 294, 303 and 329 were reformed to enable the regime of the Employment and Economic Development Zones in the Constitution and none of those is set in stone". However, the Honduran lawyer and researcher, Rafael Jerez, from his Twitter account, stated that the statement made by the Secretary of Próspera is false and that an unreformable article was reformed: Article 294, related to the national territory."<sup>48</sup>

ZEDE Próspera also requested consultations under the free trade agreement CAFTA-DR demanding to continue its operations.<sup>49</sup> In Honduras, social movements filed two complaints before the MP regarding the possible usurpation of functions committed by members of the Committee for the Adoption of Best Practices of the ZEDE, better known as CAMP.<sup>50</sup> The ZEDes are a challenge for the Xiomara administration which promised their total repeal.<sup>51</sup>

On June 29, UFERCO conducted an inspection at the National Statistics Institute (INE) as part of an investigations into the ZEDes.<sup>52 53</sup>

## **Corruption and Its Enemies**

On June 2, the MP pressed charges in an important JOH-era case against the former head of COPECO, Gabriel Alfredo Rubí Paredes.<sup>54</sup> But unlike defenders, he can await his trial in freedom.<sup>55</sup>

45 <https://www.bufetejusticiaparalospueblos.org/blank-page>

46 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/component/k2/item/6145-posponen-juicio-contra-defensores-del-rio-petacon-fiscal-argumento-que-no-tiene-los-testigos-tribunal-tolera-conducta-maliciosa>

47 <https://twitter.com/OACNUDH/status/1539042446876844033>

48 <https://criterio.hn/funcionarios-de-las-zede-mienten-al-decir-que-no-se-trastocaron-articulos-petresos/>

49 <https://criterio.hn/zede-prospera-presiona-por-dialogo-bajo-cafta-dr/>

50 <https://criterio.hn/denuncian-el-camp-de-las-zede-por-usurpacion-de-funciones/>

51 <https://criterio.hn/la-otra-realidad-tras-la-derogacion-de-las-zede-y-el-discurso-enganoso-del-presidente-del-congreso/>

52 [https://twitter.com/MP\\_Honduras/status/1542334410888019971](https://twitter.com/MP_Honduras/status/1542334410888019971)

53 <https://criterio.hn/uferco-abre-investigacion-sobre-instalacion-de-las-zede-en-honduras/>

54 <https://confidencialhn.com/mp-presenta-requerimiento-fiscal-con-orden-de-captura-contra-exministro-de-copeco-y-4-funcionarios-mas/>

55 <https://radioprogreso.net/aplicacion-movil/gabriel-rubi-y-compania-se-defenderan-en-libertad/>

On June 20, a court decided to sent the case to trial.<sup>56</sup> In another important case, about the Palmerola airport, Congress announced the creation of a special commission looking into it.<sup>57</sup> The MP also presented a new case related to the pandemic against seven former employees of Inversión Estratégica de Honduras (Invest-H) for the millionaire irregular purchase of 474 thousand masks.<sup>58</sup> Its trial started on June 13.<sup>59</sup> Another important case relates to the former JOH advisor Ebal Díaz. Executives at the Property Institute (IP) demanded from the MP to press charges against Díaz for corruption.<sup>60</sup> The CNA presented a new corruption case involving the National Supplier of Basic Goods (BANASUPRO).<sup>61</sup> By mid-June, another case was made public. A former National Agri-Food Health and Safety Service (SENASA) official was accused of corruption.<sup>62</sup>

"On May 27th [see last month's monitor], the National Congress repealed 19 decrees that led to the creation of governmental trusts that "deteriorated and immobilized public finances". This package of reforms proposed by President Castro omits the Fideicomiso Nacional de Apoyo y Promoción al Deporte (Finaprode) which was used to benefit businessmen and congressmen of the previous administration, according to an investigation by Contracorriente."<sup>63</sup>

On June 9, Criterio reported that "[t]he Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Antonio Guterres, ratified that they maintain the will for the International Commission Against Impunity (CICIH) to be established in Honduras as soon as possible, assured the Chancellor of the Republic, Enrique Reina".<sup>64</sup> Reina later said it could take until the end of the year to sign something.<sup>65</sup> EU ambassador Jaume Segura announced that they would support such an anti-corruption body, but only if it is independent.<sup>66</sup> CESPAD published a report on the need for an independent and autonomous UN-backed anti-corruption mission with a strong focus on human rights.<sup>67</sup>

After the end of the JOH regime, one of his closest allies, Ebal Díaz, suddenly left Honduras. He initially claimed to return soon, but this month it was made public that the Ortega government in Nicaragua gave citizenship to him.<sup>68</sup> Additionally to Díaz, Nicaragua also gave citizenship to JOH's former presidential secretary Ricardo Cardona López and his family.<sup>69</sup> The MP then announced that they had frozen their bank accounts.<sup>70</sup>

On June 21, "[t]he Specialized Prosecutorial Unit Against Corruption Networks (UFERCO), filed a prosecutorial request against a [Nationalist] congressman, four former [Nationalists] congressmen, two legal representatives and two accountants of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and five private individuals. They are Alberto Chedrani Castañeda (current congressman), José Oswaldo Ramos Soto, Ricardo Antonio Díaz Aceituno, José Vicente León Rojas and Rodimiro Mejía Merino (former congressmen), who according to the investigations carried out in the period between 2013-

56 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/auto-de-formal-procesamiento-en-contra-de-exministro-de-copeco-otros-funcionarios-y-empresario/>

57 <https://www.expedientepublico.org/el-congreso-investiga-si-el-contrato-de-palmerola-es-lesivo-para-los-hondurenos/>

58 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/mp-presenta-nuevo-caso-por-corrupcion-durante-la-pandemia/>

59 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/comienza-audiencia-inicial-por-millonaria-compra-irregular-de-mascarillas-en-invest-h/>

60 <https://confidencialhn.com/solicitan-al-mp-presentar-requerimiento-fiscal-contra-ebal-diaz-por-supuestos-actos-de-corrupcion/>

61 <https://www.cna.hn/informe-bonosupro/>

62 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/auto-de-formal-procesamiento-contra-exfuncionario-de-senasa/>

63 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/06/14/gobierno-mantiene-en-suspension-el-fideicomiso-de-apoyo-al-deporte-a-pesar-de-irregularidades/>

64 <https://criterio.hn/naciones-unidas-preserva-voluntad-que-en-honduras-se-instale-comision-contra-la-impunidad/>

65 <https://proceso.hn/canciller-habla-de-acuerdos-solidos-con-la-onu-pero-pacto-de-la-cicih-podria-firmarse-hasta-finales-del-ano/>

66 <https://proceso.hn/ue-dispuesta-a-apoyar-comision-anticorrupcion-en-honduras-si-es-independiente/>

67 <https://cespad.org.hn/2022/06/16/coalicion-anticorrupcion-aspira-a-una-cicih-independiente-autonoma-y-con-enfoque-de-derechos-humanos/>

68 <https://tiempo.hn/delitos-corrupcion-ebal-diaz-en-honduras-nicaragua/>

69 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/06/17/ortega-nacionaliza-a-ebal-diaz-uno-de-los-hombres-mas-cercanos-al-expresidente-juan-orlando-herandez/>

70 <https://confidencialhn.com/ministerio-publico-congela-cuentas-de-los-exfuncionarios-ebal-diaz-y-ricardo-cardona/>

2017 are linked to fraudulent operations and looting of funds from the National Congress in collusion with the NGOs Community Leaders for Development (OLICODE) and Impulso Solidario (OIMSO).<sup>71</sup> They are accused of stealing almost 20 million Lempiras.<sup>72</sup> The Anti-Corruption Alliance welcomed this new case, but also raised concern that UFERCO had suffered attacks as a consequence of this new case. Additionally, witnesses received death threats.<sup>73</sup>

## The Onslaught against the Anti-Corruption Bodies

Last month, we witnessed some good news with the strengthening of UFERCO. But this is not sufficient. First, even without the congressional support, UFERCO still faces many obstacle. "The director of the Specialized Prosecutor Unit Against Corruption Networks (Uferco) of the Public Prosecutor's Office, Luis Javier Santos, in an exclusive interview with Criterio.hn, denounced that there are threats and attacks against anti-corruption prosecutors in addition to a smear campaign by sectors linked to corruption."<sup>74 75</sup>

Second, "Honduras' Penal Code, which was put in place by the conservative National Party, remains the main obstacle to challenging corrupt individuals."<sup>76</sup> Another obstacle is the Attorney General himself. "Chinchilla is considered part of the criminal structure set up by former President Juan Orlando Hernández, extradited to the United States, accused of trafficking around 500,000 kilograms of cocaine, possession of machine guns and destructive devices, and conspiracy to possess machine guns and destructive devices. Chinchilla's position, through the social networks of the Public Prosecutor's Office, coincides with the agenda set by media outlets linked to power groups that oppose the Uferco's power to prosecute those involved in corruption networks without requiring their authorization or that of another prosecutorial authority, which they consider to be "unconstitutional".<sup>77</sup> "The director of the Specialized Prosecutor Unit Against Corruption Networks (Uferco), Luis Javier Santos denounced death threats against witnesses and even prosecutors in the corruption case against deputies of the National Party, while blaming the College of Journalists of Honduras (CPH) for the media campaign."<sup>78</sup>

On June 22, the Secretariat of State in the Offices of Transparency and Fight against Corruption (STLCC) denounced not to be able to do its work because the competent authorities have not yet enabled its budget.<sup>79</sup> "Minister Edmundo Orellana himself confirmed that "for three months we have been fighting for the approval of the budget, but the budget analysts are furious with the Secretariat because most of them are officials of the previous regime and surely they are colluding to boycott the proposal of the President of the Republic to install a system of transparency, accountability and fight against corruption".<sup>80</sup> On June 25, the Finance Ministry announced that they disbursed the funding.<sup>81</sup>

71 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/uferco-presenta-requerimiento-fiscal-contra-red-de-corrupcion-en-el-congreso-nacional/>

72 <https://tiempo.hn/uferco-requerimiento-fiscal-red-de-corrupcion-cv/>

73 <https://confidencialhn.com/coalicion-anticorrupcion-se-solidariza-con-la-uferco-y-celebra-primera-accion-judicial-directa/>

74 <https://criterio.hn/fiscal-luis-javier-santos-denuncia-amenazas-ataques-y-campana-contra-la-uferco-por-lucha-anticorrupcion/>

75 <https://criterio.hn/partido-nacional-y-colegio-de-periodistas-uniforman-su-discurso-en-contra-de-la-uferco/>

76 <https://criterio.hn/aunque-uferco-tiene-estatus-especial-codigo-penal-sigue-siendo-obstaculo-para-combatir-a-corruptos/>

77 <https://criterio.hn/oscar-chinchilla-y-su-incomoda-postura-ante-independencia-de-la-uferco/>

78 <https://criterio.hn/amenazan-a-muerte-a-testigos-en-el-caso-de-corrupcion-de-la-uferco-contra-diputados-del-partido-nacional/>

79 <https://criterio.hn/pese-a-ostentar-el-poder-secretaria-anticorrupcion-denuncia-boicot-a-la-institucion-por-parte-del-gobierno-anterior/>

80 <https://proceso.hn/denuncian-boicot-contra-secretaria-de-transparencia/>

81 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/24/finanzas-asegura-que-ya-autorizo-transferencia-de-fondos-a-transparencia/>

Anti-corruption bodies in Honduras rely on a functioning judicial system. Throughout the month, there were calls for a transparent selection process for the new Supreme Court judges.<sup>82</sup> "The election of the magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) is considered one of the determining factors for the functioning of the International Commission Against Impunity in Honduras (CICIH) in the event that its installation is agreed with the United Nations as a guarantee for the fight against corruption. Several analysts consider that the fight against corruption and impunity in the Central American nation will depend on the election of the 15 magistrates that make up the Judiciary, being the citizens a key element for its execution."<sup>83</sup> On June 29, UN representative in Honduras, Alice Shackelford, said that they are concerned that a clear message is not being handled in the National Congress regarding the election of new judges of the Supreme Court.<sup>84</sup> Libre congressional vice-president Rasel Tomé stated that there was still enough time to approve the law.<sup>85</sup>

## Congresses

Luis Redondo, Congress' president, presented his report on the first 100 days of the new Congress. It highlights an almost 3 billion Lempiras theft by the previous Congress. "The anomalies in the previous Congresses are multiple, among them the falsification of documents, destruction of physical and electronic public files in order to hide information and elimination of incriminating evidence, denounces the report headed by the head of this State power, Luis Redondo."<sup>86 87</sup>

## Mobile Hospitals

In the mobile hospitals corruption case, the former INVEST-H director Marco Bográn was condemned to 10 years and 11 months prison.<sup>88</sup> During his corruption trial, Marco Bográn stated that the former officials Rocio Tabora, former finance minister, Roxana Rodriguez, former vice-minister of budget and Lilian Rivera, former vice-minister of public credits, were all involved in the mobile hospital fraud.<sup>89</sup>

## Hermes

At the end of the month, the MP informed that seven accused in an important UFERCO corruption case, Hermes, would be sent to trial. The National Party is not amused.<sup>90</sup>

## IHSS

The sentence against the former IHSS director Mario Zelaya in the huge corruption scandal involving the social security institute was ratified.<sup>91</sup>

82 <https://dplf.org/es/news/honduras-la-independencia-judicial-precisa-un-nuevo-marco-regulador-de-la-junta-nominadora>

83 <https://criterio.hn/eleccion-de-magistrados-considerado-factor-determinante-para-funcionamiento-de-cicih/>

84 <https://proceso.hn/congreso-tiene-que-dar-un-mensaje-claro-en-eleccion-de-magistrados-de-csj-expresa-representante-de-onu/>

85 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/29/tome-asegura-que-hay-tiempo-para-aprobar-la-ley-de-la-junta-nominadora/>

86 <https://proceso.hn/despilfarros-fraude-y-redes-de-corrupcion-internas-en-congresos-antiguos-denuncia-en-informe-luis-redondo/>

87 <https://criterio.hn/congreso-pago-seguro-medico-y-de-vida-a-micheletti-y-joh-durante-administracion-de-mauricio-oliva/>

88 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/10/condenan-a-marco-bogran-a-10-anos-de-prision-mas-pena-multimillonaria/>

89 [https://twitter.com/Prohn\\_Honduras/status/1539772675605860353](https://twitter.com/Prohn_Honduras/status/1539772675605860353)

90 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/30/diputado-desmiente-ser-promotor-de-requerimientos-fiscales-contra-periodistas/>

91 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/sala-penal-le-da-la-razon-al-mp-al-dejar-firme-fallo-condenatorio-por-corrupcion-en-el-ihss/>

## State Security Forces

At the beginning of the month, the corresponding commission had received 1100 requests for reintegration of purged members of the police force.<sup>92</sup> Purged police members also took to the streets and protested.<sup>93</sup>

"Members of the former Honduran elite police unit, the COBRAS, worked with the 'Los Grillos' criminal gang to steal drug money and shipments, according to newly released U.S. court documents. Los Grillos, together with the special forces police unit are involved in selling and stealing drugs "through police operations" and according to Honduran press reports, act as contract hitman."<sup>94</sup>

The head of the National Police Gustavo Sánchez found clear words about some ongoing problems with state security forces: "Police, military, prosecutors, judicial officials, businessmen, politicians, bus drivers and collectors, and other government agencies are allegedly involved in criminal structures engaged in extortion."<sup>95</sup>

Security Minister Ramón Sabillón commented on the insecurity in Honduras and highlighted the difficulty to change a security model put in place over two decades in just four months. ""We are aiming to solve all the problems of citizen insecurity that we have, no matter the connotations, the approach, we are trying to respond to all the needs of the people; it is not easy to change a security model of 21 years and transform it today in a government that has another citizen security policy, which is in the sense of a community police, open, inclusive, addressing all security problems, what was not done in 22 years today we want to do in four months ... it is difficult to transform it in 4 months," he said."<sup>96</sup> The Honduran government signed an agreement with the UNDP "to strengthen the integral policy of coexistence and citizen security with a gender and human rights approach".<sup>97</sup>

Four members of the Armed Forces were sentenced to two years in prison for cruel and inhuman treatment of a young man in their detention.<sup>98</sup> Two police agents will be sent to prison for abuse of authority, they beat a young man in 2015.<sup>99</sup>

Reporteros de Investigación reports on the use of false positives in the fight against extortion in Honduras. According to their investigation, security forces received a bonus for each person captured.<sup>100</sup>

## Repressions

Defensores en Línea denounced at the end of the month that a group of young people were attacked by military elements when they were driving from the community of Zarabanda to take a walk to the municipality of Santa Lucía, Francisco Morazán.<sup>101</sup>

92 <https://confidencialhn.com/policia-nacional-iniciara-el-proceso-de-readiestramiento-de-agentes-depurados-que-seran-reintegrados/>

93 <https://ellibertador.hn/2022/06/07/policias-depurados-amenazan-con-protestas-gobierno-anuncia-resolucion/>

94 <https://www.hondurasnow.org/new-documents-highlight-u-s-trained-special-forces-involved-in-drug-trafficking-and-gangs/>

95 <https://proceso.hn/funcionarios-policiales-judiciales-y-de-otros-entes-del-estado-están-detras-de-extorsion-reconoce-director-de-pn/>

96 <https://confidencialhn.com/es-difícil-cambiar-un-modelo-de-seguridad-de-más-de-20-años-en-4-meses-ramon-sabillon/>

97 <https://confidencialhn.com/pnud-suscribe-convenio-con-honduras-para-fortalecer-la-politica-de-seguridad-ciudadana/>

98 <https://www.radiohrn.hn/sentencia-cuatro-militares-honduras-tratos-crueles-inhumanos-degradantes-contra-hondureno-2022-06-23>

99 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/fiscalia-de-derechos-humanos-logra-auto-de-formal-prision-para-dos-policias-preventivos/>

100 <https://reporterosdeinvestigacion.com/2022/06/30/para-evitar-asesinato-de-testigos-corte-de-ny-protecte-datos-en-juicio-del-presidente-de-honduras/>

101 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/siguen-los-abusos-de-las-fuerzas-militares-hacia-la-poblacion-hondurena/>

## Assassinations

Two members of the police will face trial for attempted murder.<sup>102</sup>

## Penitentiary System

The former director and deputy director of the Támara prison were arrested. Both are accused of torture.<sup>103 104</sup>

"Defenders of the rights of persons deprived of liberty denounce that cruel and degrading treatment of this population continues to occur in prisons and question the granting of measures other than imprisonment for military personnel accused of torture in the "Marco Aurelio Soto" National Penitentiary."<sup>105</sup>

## Militarization

There was a setback to the promised demilitarization of Honduras. The Xiomara administration announced to task the Military Police with fighting drug trafficking, i.e. the controversial unit won't be dissolved.<sup>106</sup> Additionally, the agricultural sector also remains militarized.<sup>107</sup>

## International Community

"The Government will not use in its entirety the 800 million dollars made available by the World Bank for Honduras, confirmed the Minister of the Presidency Rodolfo Pastor de María y Campos. (...) However, in Honduras there is a regulation which indicates that it is not allowed to get into debt for more than 350 million dollars a year, "so there is a limit as to the loans we can receive, this limit prevents us from accessing the total funds", said the official."<sup>108</sup> On June 4, the BCIE announced that it had approved indicative financing of up to US\$800 million to finance a temporary support program in the region in response to rising world fuel prices.<sup>109</sup> Honduras has \$2 billion in debt at the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE)).<sup>110</sup>

"The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will provide assistance to Honduras to install an "Electronic Government" system to provide a better service to the population and investors, an official source informed on Wednesday."<sup>111</sup> "The Government of Honduras announced that the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will provide technological support for educational centers, especially those farthest away from energy and internet connection, informed the Secretary of Education, Daniel Esponda."<sup>112</sup> "The Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank (WB)

102 <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/auto-de-formal-procesamiento-contra-dos-policias-involucrados-en-intento-de-homicidio/>

103 <https://confidencialhn.com/exaltos-oficiales-de-la-carcel-de-tamara-fueron-capturados-confirma-ffaa>

104 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/fotogalerias/captura-dos-exdirectores-penitenciarios-acusados-tortura-datos-YC8703144>

105 <https://criterio.hn/denuncian-que-continuan-tratos-crueles-en-carceles-de-honduras/>

106 <https://criterio.hn/gobierno-de-xiomara-castro-apuesta-por-conservar-la-policia-militar-brazo-armado-que-creo-regimen-de-job/>

107 <https://criterio.hn/el-engano-del-comando-agricola-ante-un-falso-clamor-de-agricultores/>

108 <https://confidencialhn.com/solo-350-millones-podra-utilizar-el-gobierno-del-total-dispuesto-por-el-bm-para-honduras/>

109 <https://confidencialhn.com/bcie-aprueba-financiacion-de-800-millones-de-dolares-para-afrontar-impacto-de-combustibles-en-la-region/>

110 <https://confidencialhn.com/de-2-mil-millones-de-dolares-es-la-deuda-que-mantiene-honduras-con-el-bcie/>

111 <https://confidencialhn.com/bid-ayudara-a-honduras-en-instalar-un-gobierno-electronico/>

112 <https://confidencialhn.com/gobierno-anuncia-que-el-bid-brindara-apoyo-tecnologico-para-los-centros-educativos-del-pais/>



approved two new projects for a total of US\$185 million to strengthen the health system and address vulnerability in Honduras, the international financial organization announced".<sup>113</sup>

On June 20, the Honduran government met with an IMF delegation to discuss future agreements.<sup>114</sup> They met for several days. "[A]t the closing meeting of the IMF tour, we reiterated that the primary objective of the Government is to faithfully implement the Government Plan, the firm commitment to reduce poverty, protect the vulnerable population, promote inclusive economic growth, and combat corruption."<sup>115</sup>

## US

The start of the Americas Summit (see below under Varia) brought about a lot of announcements by the US government.<sup>116 117 118 119</sup> These announcements were critically accompanied, among others by US representatives Chuy García, Jan Schakowsky and Delia Ramirez. "The U.S. must acknowledge its role in the root causes of migration from Central America & be honest about the role our foreign policy has played in destabilizing the region. I joined Rep. @JanSchakowsky & @RepDeliaRamirez to advocate for anti-imperialist foreign policy."<sup>120</sup>

SOUTH COM commander Laura Jane Richardson visited Honduras and met with Xiomara.<sup>121</sup> As part of her visit to Honduras, she promised US support for the modernization of the Honduran Armed Forces.<sup>122</sup>

## EU

Proceso Digital reported that "[t]he European Union and Central America have resumed their political dialogue and are analyzing the status of the Association Agreement between the two regions, which has been in force for almost a decade, with a view to improving it and moving towards more sustainable development".<sup>123</sup>

"The issues of climate change, decent employment and rule of law and democracy appear as priorities in the cooperation agenda of the European Union (EU) with Honduras, said Friday in an interview with Efe the European ambassador in Tegucigalpa, Jaume Segura."<sup>124</sup>

"The Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE) and the Federal Republic of Germany signed a financial cooperation agreement for up to EUR 132.0 million to promote sustainable, accessible and safe multimodal transportation projects for people that, in turn,

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113 <https://proceso.hn/banco-mundial-otorga-dos-prestamos-para-atender-emergencia-sanitaria-y-reducir-vulnerabilidad-en-honduras/>

114 <https://confidencialh.com/fmi-y-gabinete-economico-de-honduras-inician-reuniones-en-busca-de-nuevos-acuerdos/>

115 <https://proceso.hn/finalizan-reuniones-entre-gobierno-y-delegacion-del-fmi-sobre-el-plan-de-gobierno/>

116 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/07/fact-sheet-vice-president-harris-announces-more-than-1-9-billion-in-new-private-sector-commitments-as-part-of-call-to-action-for-northern-central-america/>

117 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/07/fact-sheet-vice-president-harris-announces-the-central-american-service-corps-casc/>

118 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/07/fact-sheet-vice-president-harris-announces-new-commitments-supporting-womens-economic-empowerment-in-latin-america/>

119 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/06/readout-of-vice-president-harris-dinner-with-business-executives-and-leadership-of-the-call-to-action-for-northern-central-america/>

120 <https://twitter.com/RepChuyGarcia/status/1534243926785331200>

121 <https://proceso.hn/la-presidenta-de-honduras-se-reune-con-la-jefa-del-comando-sur-de-eeuu/>

122 <https://confidencialh.com/estados-unidos-confirma-apoyo-para-la-modernizacion-de-las-fuerzas-armadas-de-honduras/>

123 <https://proceso.hn/ue-y-centroamerica-analizan-acuerdo-de-asociacion-para-impulsar-desarrollo/>

124 <https://proceso.hn/cambio-climatico-y-empleo-prioridades-de-cooperacion-de-ue-con-honduras/>

contribute to improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to promote Sustainable Urban Mobility projects in Central America."<sup>125</sup>

## Drug Trafficking

The MP had 79 goods and properties seized belonging to JOH's brother Juan Antonio "Tony" Hernández Alvarado and the deceased Wilkin Montalván linked to Juan Ramón Matta Waldurraga.<sup>126</sup>

On June 24, a judge allowed the extradition of accused drug trafficker Herlinda Bobadilla to the US.<sup>127</sup> "The head of a top Honduran drug clan will be extradited to the US, as officials chip away at the leadership of a once-powerful transport group. Herlinda Bobadilla, considered the principal leader of the longstanding Montes-Bobadilla drug clan, also known as "Los Montes," was greenlit for extradition to the United States on June 14. Her May 15 arrest resulted in the death of her son and criminal associate, Tito Montes Bobadilla, shortly after the two had \$5 million bounties placed on their heads by the US State Department."<sup>128</sup>

The sentencing of the former Honduran congressman Fredy Nájera in the US for drug trafficking was postponed to July 6.<sup>129</sup> Later it was even postponed to July 29.<sup>130</sup> US prosecutor demanded a life sentence for him. His defense proposed a 15-year sentence.<sup>131</sup>

On June 24, Norlan José "El Catracho" Carrasco López was detained, a Honduran wanted for extradition.<sup>132</sup>

## JOH

David C. Adams and Jeff Ernst published a great piece on JOH's peculiar legal team including rabbis and a YouTube detective.<sup>133</sup> El Heraldo reported that some 50 witnesses would testify during JOH's trial starting on September 28. Among them may even be the former police chief and extradited drug trafficker suspect Juan Carlos "El Tigre" Bonilla.<sup>134</sup>

On June 9, El Heraldo reported that the prosecution in New York started to negotiate with the former Honduran police chief Juan Carlos "El Tigre" Bonilla and demanded a rescheduling of the second hearing in his case.<sup>135</sup> Apparently, it will now take place on July 11.<sup>136</sup> Back in Honduras, the MP seized goods and properties of Bonilla worth 10 million Lempiras, from the same Bonilla who just weeks ago said that he was broke and could not pay for a lawyer.<sup>137</sup> <sup>138</sup>

<sup>125</sup> <https://proceso.hn/bcie-y-alemania-firman-convenio-para-fomentar-la-movilidad-urbana-sostenible-de-ca/>

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/operacion-eslabon-mp-asegura-79-bienes-a-estructura-del-extinto-wilkin-montalvan-ligada-a-juan-ramon-matta-waldurraga-y-juan-antonio-herandez-alvarado/>

<sup>127</sup> <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/autorizan-extradicion-herlinda-bobadilla-narcotrafico-honduras-JK8639391>

<sup>128</sup> <https://insightcrime.org/news/final-resurrection-honduras-montes-bobadilla-clan/>

<sup>129</sup> <https://proceso.hn/sentencia-para-exdiputado-fredy-najera-ya-no-sera-el-29-de-junio/>

<sup>130</sup> <https://proceso.hn/sentencia-a-exdiputado-fredy-najera-pospuesta-ahora-para-el-29-de-julio/>

<sup>131</sup> <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/defensa-fredy-najera-seria-injusto-imponerle-cadena-perpetua-NG8778807>

<sup>132</sup> <https://proceso.hn/detienen-a-extraditible-hondureno-que-habia-sido-requerido-en-belice-con-narcoavioneta/>

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/legal-team-defense-honduras-extradited-president-herandez>

<sup>134</sup> <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/defensa-expresidente-herandez-preve-tigre-bonilla-testifique-en-contra-joh-juan-orlando-nueva-york-narcotrafico-extraditados-honduras-AA8552637>

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/fiscalia-estados-unidos-confirma-negocia-juan-carlos-tigre-bonilla-extraditado-narcotrafico-hondureno-exjefe-policia-JD8599694>

<sup>136</sup> <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/10/reprograman-audiencia-de-bonilla-en-ee-uu-fiscalia-incauta-sus-bienes/>

<sup>137</sup> <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/mp-procede-a-incautar-19-bienes-y-productos-financieros-al-exdirector-de-la-policia-juan-carlos-bonilla/>

<sup>138</sup> <https://twitter.com/HondurasNow/status/1535422902228684802>



## Varia

### Xiomara

CESPAD highlighted various challenges faced by the Xiomara administration (the chronic deficit of a democratic state of rights; the authoritarian enclave of the military; chronic police corruption the ineffective system for the protection of human rights) as well as possible paths forward (transformation and democratization of the State; enabling the civic-democratic space; demilitarization of the State and Society; carrying out a true police reform; redefining the design of the national system for the defense of human rights).<sup>139</sup>

On June 23, the Central Bank of Honduras approved a \$1 billion loan to the Xiomara administration financed by Honduras' international reserves. "The head of Finance, Rixi Moncada, explained that the financial action was carried out to cover the social program of the Executive, with the respective adjustment in the institutions."<sup>140</sup>

### Congress

On June 8, Libre congressman Jorge Cáliz was elected as the head of an independent bench in Congress.<sup>141</sup> This goes back to the beginning of the Xiomara administration when a rift went through Libre regarding the congressional leadership. After some weeks, things calmed down and everyone seemed to be behind Luis Redondo as the president of Congress, but some days ago, the discussions flared up again.

### Summit of the Americas

On June 6, the XI Summit of the Americas took off amid controversy about the guest list.<sup>142</sup><sup>143</sup> President Xiomara did not attend, but the Honduran government was represented by Foreign Minister Enrique Reina, Economic Development Minister Pedro Barquero and the presidential secretary Héctor Zelaya.<sup>144</sup><sup>145</sup> "While the media campaign against President Xiomara Castro for not attending the Summit of the Americas continues to cause a stir in Honduras, the White House states that good relations will continue and that it is their "sovereign right".<sup>146</sup> "The Foreign Minister of Honduras, Eduardo Enrique Reina, defended the decision of President Xiomara Castro not to attend the IX Summit of the Americas taking place in Los Angeles, USA, due to the exclusion of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, and affirmed that the position of the president does not affect the "good relationship" that the country has with the White House. In an interview with CNN, the official, who attended the Summit on behalf of Honduras, pointed out that the determination of the leftist president does not have to do with an ideological issue but with a "moral" issue, and recalled that

139 <https://cespad.org.hn/2022/06/08/el-autoritarismo-en-derechos-humanos-la-herencia-de-12-anos-en-honduras/>

140 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/23/bch-anuncia-aprobacion-de-prestamo-de-mil-millones-de-dolares-al-ejecutivo/>

141 <https://criterio.hn/diputados-disidentes-de-libre-concretan-bancada-independiente-se-augura-nuevas-crisis/>

142 <https://radioprogreso.hn/aplicacion-movil/hoy-arranca-cumbre-de-las-americas-en-estados-unidos/>

143 <https://criterio.hn/inasistencia-de-xiomara-castro-a-la-cumbre-de-las-americas-genera-controversia-en-honduras/>

144 <https://twitter.com/XiomaraCastroZ/status/1534015632433369088>

145 <https://criterio.hn/xiomara-castro-no-asistira-a-cumbre-de-las-americas-y-ee-uu-asegura-que-no-habra-repercusiones/>

146 <https://criterio.hn/ausencia-de-presidenta-castro-en-cumbre-no-interfiere-en-relacion-con-honduras-casa-blanca/>

former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández, now on trial for drug trafficking and possession of weapons in a New York court, was invited to these regional conclaves. "Juan Orlando Hernandez was a human rights violator in a narco-state, a failed state, was he ever denied entry to any summit? He went to the Summits of the Americas and they never told him not to come", said the Foreign Minister."<sup>147</sup>

## Amnesty Law

13 UNAH students criminalized since 2017 had their charges dropped thanks to the Amnesty Law at the beginning of the month.<sup>148 149</sup> The same day, it was made public that another former public employee under the Zelaya government benefited from the Amnesty Law.<sup>150</sup>

After it has been announced for weeks, the the PSH presented a bill to reform the law at the beginning of the month.<sup>151 152</sup> But the proposed reforms to the Amnesty Law seemed no less controversial than the initial law because it opened up the possibility for monetary compensation. The stated aim of the reform is to have a clear definition of political crimes and political persecution. "On his side, lawyer Edy Tábor, who is also a human rights defender, said that the spirit of the amnesty is based on a constitutional mechanism to put an end to many processes used to criminalize people who fought for democracy. However, he pointed out that the decree has two axes: the first one has not been objected because it solves the criminal situation of social fighters, but there is another axis that includes crimes related to public administration. Tábor recommended the judges to verify if the crimes of the amnesty applicants are contemplated in the political facts."<sup>153</sup>

COFADEH published an article highlighting the importance of the Amnesty Law. 138 people have benefited so far, the great majority political prisoners and defenders criminalized related to land and territory struggles.<sup>154</sup>

## Migration

Deportations to the three Northern Triangle countries reached almost 70'000 in the first four months of 2022, over 100% more than the previous year.<sup>155</sup> Since 2014, almost 100'000 Honduran children have been deported.<sup>156</sup>

Criterio reported on the situation of children fleeing Honduras.<sup>157</sup> Honduras is also a transit country and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) inaugurated a new office in Choluteca to strengthen access to immigrants arriving in that region with the intention of continuing on their way

147 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/09/honduras-senala-amoralidad-de-eeuu-en-cumbre-joh-es-violador-de-ddhh-y-nunca-le-dijeron-que-no-venga/>

148 <https://tiempo.hn/13-estudiantes-de-la-unah-con-la-amnistia-politica/>

149 <https://criterio.hn/trece-universitarios-quedan-en-libertad-con-amnistia-6-continuan-siendo-criminalizados-por-la-unah/>

150 <https://confidencialhn.com/otorgan-carta-de-libertad-por-tres-delitos-a-otro-exfuncionario-del-poder-ciudadano/>

151 <https://confidencialhn.com/ligia-ramos-diputada-del-psh-confirma-que-ya-presentaron-la-iniciativa-para-reformar-la-ley-de-amnistia-politica/>

152 <https://criterio.hn/los-tres-poderes-del-estado-confabulados-para-darle-vida-y-tramite-a-cuestionada-amnistia/>

153 <https://proceso.hn/reforma-a-la-amnistia-una-ventana-para-millonarias-indemnizaciones/>

154 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/el-decreto-de-amnistia-es-y-seguira-siendo-para-las-victimas-de-la-dictadura/>

155 <https://proceso.hn/deportaciones-al-norte-de-centroamerica-suman-69188-un-107-mas-que-2021/>

156 <https://criterio.hn/entre-2014-a-2022-han-deportado-96-mil-ninas-ninos-y-adolescentes-de-honduras>

157 <https://criterio.hn/ninez-migrante-no-ve-un-futuro-alentador-en-honduras/>

to the United States.<sup>158</sup> UNHCR also published an infographic on forced displacement in Honduras.<sup>159</sup> "The United Nations (UN) urged the Honduran government once again on Monday to pass the immigration amnesty law and benefit migrants who are stranded in the Central American country for not being able to pay the administrative penalty imposed by the National Migration Institute (INM)."<sup>160</sup> On June 30, Defensores en Línea reported on the ever increasingly difficult situation in El Paraíso where more than 200 migrants enter Honduras in search of the US.<sup>161</sup>

In mid-June, near Texas, a truck was found with over 50 dead migrants. At least 14 Hondurans were among them.<sup>162</sup> The UN called for an investigation.<sup>163</sup> The US, Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras created a joint task force to combat human trafficking in a response to the tragic event.<sup>164</sup>

## Health Care

"In Honduras, every two hours a child under five years of age dies as a result of the lack of preventive health interventions, said the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ) on Tuesday in the fifth installment of the series "State of the country: Honduras 2022". (... ) In this issue, it pointed out that the deterioration of the health system is shown by the fact that between 2011 and 2022, an average of 3,925 children under five years of age died each year, in many cases due to the lack of preventive health intervention; in other words, in Honduras, a child under five years of age dies every two hours."<sup>165</sup>

## Poverty

Remittances sent to Honduras increased by over 20% compared to 2021.<sup>166</sup>

"The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) predicted that food insecurity could worsen in Honduras between July and August. The collateral effects of the war between Russia and Ukraine directly affect the price of fertilizers and fuel, so small Honduran producers face a hopeless reality. Government programs for farmers do not reach them, while the consumer pays for an increasingly expensive basic food basket."<sup>167</sup> "The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) presented the report "Repercussions of the war in Ukraine: How to face this new crisis?" in which it states that Honduras is one of the most affected nations in the region, causing higher inflation, food insecurity and poverty."<sup>168</sup>

"There are fears that the threat posed by pneumonia – already one of the leading causes of child death in Honduras – is growing. Child deaths caused by the disease are strongly linked to malnutrition, lack of safe water and sanitation, and inadequate access to healthcare."<sup>169</sup> According to World Vision, child labor increased by more than 30% in Honduras as a consequence of the

158 <https://confidencialhn.com/acnur-inaugura-oficina-en-el-sur-de-honduras-para-apoyar-a-los-inmigrantes/>

159 <https://twitter.com/ACNURhonduras/status/1537539153457463298>

160 <https://proceso.hn/onu-urge-nuevamente-a-honduras-a-aplicar-ammistia-migratoria/>

161 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/la-migracion-en-el-paraiso-llego-a-los-peores-escenarios/>

162 <https://criterio.hn/a-14-asciende-hondurenos-migrantes-fallecidos-dentro-de-trailer-en-san-antonio-texas/>

163 <https://ellibertador.hn/2022/06/29/onu-exige-investigacion-por-tragedia-de-migrantes-en-texas-14-hondurenos-entre-victimas/>

164 <https://confidencialhn.com/eeuu-mexico-guatemala-y-honduras-crean-grupo-contra-el-trafico-de-personas/>

165 <https://confidencialhn.com/en-honduras-cada-dos-horas-muere-un-nino-menor-de-cinco-anos-por-falta-de-una-intervencion-de-prevencion-en-salud-asj/>

166 <https://confidencialhn.com/remesas-suben-un-20-1-en-honduras-en-los-primeros-cinco-meses-de-2022/>

167 <https://contra corriente.red/2022/06/03/crisis-alimentaria-en-honduras-impacta-a-pequenos-productores-y-aumenta-precio-de-canasta-basica/>

168 <https://criterio.hn/cepal-expone-que-guerra-en-ucrania-hunde-a-honduras-en-inflacion-pobreza-e-inseguridad-alimentaria/>

169 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/jun/09/poverty-drought-impending-famine-now-pneumonia-takes-its-cruel-toll-on-honduran-children-acc>

pandemic.<sup>170</sup> ConfidencialHN reported that child labor even almost doubled to 1 million children since 2020 as a consequence of the two hurricanes and the pandemic.<sup>171</sup>

On June 22, the Xiomara administration announce new details on the Solidarity Network social program aimed to support 350'000 families.<sup>172</sup> Additionally, they announced to freeze fuel prices for the four weeks.<sup>173</sup> The measure will cost 145 million Lempiras according to government estimates.<sup>174</sup> Meanwhile, consumer organizations denounced the rise of basic prices.<sup>175</sup>

## Coup d'état

With the 13th anniversary of the coup d'état coming closer, the Xiomara administration inaugurated Isy Obed square on June 26.<sup>176</sup> The 19-year old Isis Obed Murillo was shot dead by state security forces on July 5, 2009 during an anti-coup protest.<sup>177</sup> The government additionally announced the Social Program to Attend the Families of the Martyrs of the Honduran Resistance.<sup>178</sup> On the day itself, there were many voices stating that for the first time Honduras is under a legitimate government since 2009.<sup>179</sup> <sup>180</sup> OACNUDH called for guaranteeing the right to justice and non-repetition for the victims of the serious human rights violations that occurred during the 2009 coup d'état.<sup>181</sup> "Thirteen years after the coup d'état against former President José Manuel Zelaya Rosales (2006-2009), writer Julio Escoto, analyst and prominent member of the resistance against the coup, says it is important that the current government begins a process of democratization without falling into the leftist rhetoric of the 1940s, or falling into the - common - way of doing politics with promises that cannot be fulfilled."<sup>182</sup>

## Education

"A report published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), places Honduras in the last places with little Internet access in Latin America, with only 20%, followed by Suriname with 19%, Guatemala with 15%, and Haiti with 4%. The Vice-Minister of Education, Marissela Figueroa, shares that the coronavirus sunk the educational sector, "it is a catastrophe because we have dropped, precisely because of that we are working and taking care of the matter". However, she disagrees with the theme given to the report because she considers that there are several factors that make it become the title, "it is not a single factor, there is poverty, but there was also a governmental co-responsibility that must be pointed out and condemned" she pointed out."<sup>183</sup>

170 <https://confidencialhn.com/world-vision-migracion-y-trabajo-infantil-aumentaron-en-30-despues-de-la-pandemia-en-honduras/>

171 <https://confidencialhn.com/casi-un-millon-de-ninos-trabaja-en-honduras-por-la-pandemia-y-tormentas/>

172 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/06/22/gobierno-lanza-programa-red-solidaria-para-beneficiar-a-mas-de-350-mil-familias/>

173 <https://confidencialhn.com/es-un-sacrificio-fuerte-del-gobierno-congelar-precio-de-la-gasolina-regular-y-diesel-asegura-hugo-noe-pino/>

174 <https://proceso.hn/de-145-millones-de-lempiras-sera-impacto-fiscal-por-congelamiento-de-combustibles/>

175 <https://confidencialhn.com/mas-de-20-productos-de-la-canasta-basica-registran-aumento-esta-semana-adecebah/>

176 <https://confidencialhn.com/hay-una-lista-de-muertos-durante-la-dictadura-que-vamos-a-develar-en-esta-placa-mel-zelaya-en-inauguracion-de-la-plaza-isy-obed/>

177 <https://twitter.com/hondurasol/status/1540760019146260480>

178 <https://proceso.hn/gobierno-anuncia-aprobacion-de-pcm-para-atencion-de-familia-martires-de-la-resistencia-en-honduras/>

179 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/component/k2/item/6147-primer-gobierno-legitimo-en-el-poder-despues-de-13-anos-del-golpe-de-estado-en-honduras>

180 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/el-aniversario-del-golpe-de-estado-de-2009-no-es-un-hecho-anecdoticos-es-un-acontecimiento-que-no-se-puede-olvidar/>

181 <https://oacnudh.hn/oacnudh-llama-a-garantizar-el-derecho-a-la-justicia-y-no-repeticion-para-las-victimas-de-las-graves-violaciones-de-derechos-humanos-ocurridas-en-el-marco-del-golpe-de-estado-de-2009/>

182 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/06/29/julio-escoto-la-constituyente-en-este-momento-no-es-realizable-debe-haber-un-proceso-de-educacion-de-largo-plazo/>

183 <https://criterio.hn/honduras-en-catastrofe-educativa-segun-informe-de-unicef/>

## COVID-19

At the end of the month, medical experts warned about an increase in COVID-19 cases straining medical services.<sup>184</sup> "The Observatory of COVID-19 of the Central American Technological University (Unitec) warned that an increase in the number of cases, hospitalizations and severe cases of this disease is being reported. They also warn of an increase in lethality from 0.17 to 0.45%, positivity increased in June by 114% compared to May."<sup>185</sup>

## And Light at the End of a Month

Over five years after her assassination, the first intellectual author of Berta Cáceres' assassination was sentenced this month to over 20 years in prison. But, the struggle continues, in Honduras - #faltanlosatala, but also abroad where COPINH filed charges against FMO.

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184 <https://confidencialhn.com/video-abarrotadas-se-encuentran-salas-covid-19-del-seguro-social/>

185 <https://proceso.hn/observatorio-de-unitec-alerta-de-aumento-de-casos-y-hospitalizaciones-por-covid-en-honduras/>

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-

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