

Another Month in Honduras...

Human Rights Monitor – May 2022

Alonso Salgado, Donaldo Rosales, and Marco Tulio Paredes Molina; Ricardo Avila and Carlos Peralta. Three defenders and two social communicators were murdered this month in Honduras. The death toll since the beginning of the year has risen to over 10. And while the case of 19 MILPAH defenders whose criminalizing charges were dropped can be celebrated, it is concerning that May also brought about new cases of criminalized defenders. Looking at the extractive industries, we see a similar mixed picture. Open pit mining has been prohibited, but mining operations continue to expand in Honduras bringing about environmental damage, repression and criminalization. Some hope comes from the visit by a UN exploratory mission on the possible installation of a UN-backed anti-corruption mission as well as from the strengthening of the Honduran anti-corruption body UFERCO. JOH, meanwhile, pleaded not guilty in New York. His trial will continue in September. 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

CESPAD analyzed the new government's first 100 days in office from a human rights perspective.¹

"The president of the National Congress, Luis Rolando Redondo, appointed a special commission to investigate Blanca Izaguirre, head of the National Commissioner for Human Rights in Honduras (CONADEH), for irregularities in the election of her position [under the JOH regime] and several complaints against her."²

Assassinations

Environmental defender Justo Benítez was murdered on April 30 in the patio of his house in the community of San Isidro.³ OACNUDH condemned the murder.⁴

The Garífuna community Rio Tinto was under siege on May 2 by criminal groups and community leader Alonso Salgado was murdered and the secretary of the elected community council, Zuri Quintanilla was injured.^{5 6}

"The Honduran Center for the Promotion of Community Development (CEHPRODEC) denounced the murder by hired killers of the defender of the commons, Donaldo Rosales, and the vulnerability of his family. Rosales, according to CEHPRODEC's report, was murdered last Sunday, May 15, while on his way to church in the community of Huertas, Minas de Oro in Comayagua."⁷

"The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) is concerned about violence, intimidation, and criminalization targeting human rights defenders in the Americas during the first four months of 2022. The Commission asks States to foster an atmosphere where it is safe to advocate for human rights. (...) In Honduras, six murders of defenders were documented over the period January–March 2022. The Commission condemned the murder of Garifuna leader Alonso Salgado on May 1, before the home of fellow leader Zury Quintanilla, who was also injured in this attack in the Tela municipality in Atlántida, as well as the murder of environmental defender Justo Benítez Sánchez on April 30 in the municipality of San Francisco de Ojuera, in the department of Santa Bárbara. The OHCHR recorded four additional murders. In March, land rights defender Francisco Ruiz died in an attack in the La Brea hamlet in the municipality of Trujillo, in the department of Colón. In January, Tolupán indigenous activist and land rights defender Melvin Geovanny Mejía was found dead in the municipality of Morazán, in the Yoro department. The Commission also condemned the murders of indigenous leader and community journalist Pablo Isabel Hernández Rivera and Thalía Rodríguez, a trans woman who was a human rights defender."⁸

"The peasant leader, Marco Tulio Paredes Molina (44), president of the Veintiuno de Julio Peasant Cooperative, was shot dead in the community of Marañones, jurisdiction of Trujillo, Colón. The

1 <http://cespad.org.hn/2022/05/25/100-dias-del-gobierno-de-castro-hacia-donde-avanzan-las-acciones-en-materia-de-derechos-humanos/>

2 <https://criterio.hn/por-irregularidades-en-su-nombramiento-y-denuncias-en-contra-congreso-investiga-a-la-ombudsman-de-honduras/>

3 <https://www.defensoresonlinea.com/en-su-casa-asesinan-a-defensor-del-ambiente-en-san-francisco-de-juera/>

4 https://oacnudh.hn/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/220502-comunicado-asesinato-Justo-Benitez-Sanchez-rev-IAE_final_MCG.pdf

5 <https://twitter.com/baraudawaguchu/status/1521160838874378240>

6 <https://im-defensoras.org/2022/05/alerta-urgente-honduras-asesinan-al-lider-garifuna-alonso-salgado-y-atentan-contra-la-vida-de-la-lideresa-zury-quintanilla/>

7 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/dh/1985-cehprodec-exige-proteccion-para-familia-de-ambientalista-asesinado>

8 https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=en/iachr/media_center/preleases/2022/114.asp

crime was committed last Friday, May 27, by heavily armed individuals who came to take his life in his home, located on the left bank of that community."⁹

Attacks, Criminalization and Harassment

COPINH denounced on May 5 the arrest of Secretary General of the CNTC in La Paz, Sebastian Reyes.¹⁰

On May 14, Arnold Aleman one of the criminalized Guapinol defenders was detained by the National Police.¹¹ "Almost three months after they regained their freedom, the eight defenders of the Guapinol River continue to live in uncertainty and to be arbitrarily detained by the National Police. This is a consequence of the negligence of the judges of the Trujillo Sentencing Court and the National Police. This weekend Arnol Alemán, one of the Guapinol River defenders, was illegally detained. Despite showing his letter of provisional freedom, he was arbitrarily arrested and transferred to Tocoa when he was requested by the public forces while traveling with his family."¹²

Two indigenous Lenca campesinos were illegally detained for hours when opposing an eviction even though their community is in possession of land titles.¹³

On May 21, Honduras Solidarity denounced that "Reynaldo Baharona, President of the Trubal Council of the Tolupán of Las Vegas de Tepemachin is a victim of harassment & intimidation by the owner of an illegal mining company La Ceibita in Victoria, Honduras".¹⁴

"After seven years of facing criminal proceedings accused of the crimes of usurpation and illegal exploitation of forest products and by-products, 19 members of the Independent Lenca Indigenous Movement of La Paz Honduras (MILPAH) and Los Laureles, were finally dismissed after the defense led by C-Libre in coordination with the Committee of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared of Honduras (COFADEH), filed a request for political amnesty in favor of those involved."¹⁵

Indigenous Peoples

UN Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, José Francisco Calí Tzay, was in Honduras for a regional forum on indigenous peoples and conservation. He highlighted the need to rethink the concept of protected areas from the millenary cosmovision, philosophy and practice of the indigenous peoples.¹⁶

OFRANEH's coordinator Miriam Miranda denounced that since a hearing at the IACtHR had taken place about the Garífuna community San Juan on April 4 and 5, the harassment of the community increased.¹⁷

9 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1500-asesinan-a-destacado-dirigente-campesino-del-aguan>

10 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1522399436596412416>

11 <https://twitter.com/hondurassol/status/1525652219995074560>

12 <https://criterio.hn/tribunal-de-trujillo-y-policia-nacional-continuan-afectando-a-defensores-de-guapinol/>

13 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1486-dos-dirigentes-campesinos-lencas-detenido-arbitrariamente-en-desalojo-en-la-paz>

14 <https://twitter.com/hondurassol/status/152820251558322176>

15 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/dh/57-pueblos-indigenas/1996-sobresimiento-definitivo-para-19-campesinos-de-milpah-y-los-laureles-en-la-paz-perseguidos-por-defender-sus-tierras-ancestrales>

16 <https://criterio.hn/areas-protegidas-deben-partir-de-la-cosmovision-milenaria-de-pueblos-indigenas-dice-relator-de-la-onu-en-visita-a-honduras/>

17 <https://twitter.com/baraudawaguchu/status/1522998728763879426>

COPINH demanded an investigation into the murder of Wilmer Alexis Domínguez Madrid, resident of the community of Río Blanco, Intibucá. Wilmer Domínguez is the brother of the defender of land, territory and natural resources, Rosalina Domínguez, who in 2019 received threats for cultivating land near the Agua Zarca project.^{18 19}

Criterio reported on the so-called drug corridor through the Moskitia and failed government promises. "On March 21, during International Environment Day, Medina announced that the Honduran government would begin destroying the so-called "narco-corridor", which has devastated the biosphere of the Río Plátano, a 110-kilometer stretch of land linking the municipalities of Dulce Nombre de Culmí, in the vast department of Olancho, with the community of Krausirpi, municipality of Wampusirpi, department of Gracias a Dios, in the Honduran Mosquitia. (...) However, a month later, last Sunday, April 25, the presidential advisor, former president of Honduras from 2006-2009, coordinator of the ruling Liberty and Refoundation Party (Libre) and husband of the president of Honduras, José Manuel Zelaya Rosales, in a meeting with Olancho cattle ranchers, agreed not to destroy the road, on the contrary, he pledged to support the work."²⁰ In a similar vein, OFRANEH denounced that the same ministry, MiAmbiente, approved a new protected area at the Garífuna coast in Irióna while at the same time starting an alliance with Mexico to explore fossil fuels there.²¹

The Case of Berta Cáceres

It has been 74 months since the murder of Berta Cáceres. "74 months of resistance to this system that seeks to deny us truth and justice. We will continue without stopping, fighting tirelessly so that there will be a real justice for Berta."²² Congress declared Berta Cáceres a national heroine. The 200 Lempira bill will be decorated with her portrait.²³ COPINH reacted: "While the date for the sentencing of the co-perpetrator of the crime of our sister Berta Cáceres is postponed @Congreso_HND declares her a national heroine. We victims are still waiting for the criminal prosecution of the intellectual authors as the best way to honor her memory. While we appreciate the gesture, this should not overshadow the State's debt to bring justice to those who paid for the crime. As long as her intellectual murderers are not incarcerated and the Gualcarque River is free of concessions, there is no justice or honor to Berta's memory."²⁴ Berta's daughter Laura even went further: "It would pain me to see my mother's face being kept in the banks of her murderers, that this rebellious face is the representation of her enrichment".²⁵ On May 30, COPINH and Laura Zúniga denounced that the new Libre mayor of Tegucigalpa, Jorge Aldana, met with the Atalas. "A few days after declaring Berta Cáceres a National Heroine, the mayor of the Capital takes pictures with one of her murderers. Symbols without justice can become empty."²⁶

18 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1524146286701731842>

19 <https://criterio.hn/exigen-investigar-asesinato-de-miembro-del-copinh-en-rio-blanco-intibuca/>

20 <https://criterio.hn/ministro-de-miambiente-queda-como-mentiroso-al-no-destruir-carretera-que-devasta-la-mosquitia/>

21 <https://twitter.com/ofraneh/status/1524865967905447936>

22 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1521263220497039360>

23 <https://twitter.com/OliviaMarcelaZ1/status/1529629800503066624>

24 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1529643791954632704>

25 <https://twitter.com/COPINHHONDURAS/status/1529924492151209985>

26 <https://twitter.com/laurizunigac/status/1531350693654798337>

At the beginning of the month, it was made public that 11 months after finding him guilty, David Castillo would know his sentence for his role in the murder of Berta Cáceres on May 18.²⁷ Amnesty International demanded justice and reparations for Berta's family as soon as possible.²⁸ But on the day of the court date, the sentencing was postponed to June 17.^{29 30}

The evidentiary hearing in the Gualcarque Fraud case was also postponed to May 26.^{31 32} When it re-started, UFERCO presented 221 pieces of evidence on the first day.³³

LGBTQ+

The documentary about trans-activist Vicky Hernández, her murder in the aftermath of the coup, and the long fight for justice was screened in Honduras this month.^{34 35}

Libre Congressman Victor Grajeda outed himself as the first openly gay member of Congress in Honduras.³⁶ He also presented a bill to have May 17 as the National Day against Homophobia.³⁷ But as a consequence of his outing, he suffered discrimination, even from fellow members of Congress. OACNUDH laments this.³⁸

On May 9, "the government of Honduras officially took responsibility for the murder of trans woman and activist Vicky Hernandez. For a country with one of the world's worst records of anti-trans violence, this 'Public Act of Recognition' is a significant and welcome development".^{39 40 41} "In accordance with the reparations measures dictated by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR Court), President Xiomara Castro committed to comply with the change of name according to gender identity before June 28th of this year, informed the Catrachas Lesbian Network."⁴²

Libre congressman Manuel Rodríguez announced to present a bill to legalize same-sex marriage on May 18.⁴³ But at the same time, Libre's speaker in Congress, Rafael Sarmiento, said that Libre would not support same-sex marriage.⁴⁴

"The Colectiva Muñecas de Arco Iris, denounced that last Friday, May 20, the human rights defender, Rixi García (34), was beaten in a street of Comayagüela in the Central District. The director of the Association Arco Iris, Donny Reyes, reported that Rixi García is a defender of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGTB) people and that, when she was attacked, she

27 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1524459382766985219>
28 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/05/honduras-caceres-family-justice-soon-as-possible/>
29 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1526721128173010946>
30 <https://copinh.org/2022/05/comunicado-justicia-hondurena-retrasa-injustificadamente-sentencia-a-condenado-david-castillo/>
31 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1528780126183374848>
32 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1528807971978985472>
33 <https://twitter.com/COPINHONDURAS/status/1529851695198523394>
34 <https://criterio.hn/estrenan-documental-sobre-la-vida-muerte-y-justicia-por-el-transfemicidio-de-vicky-hernandez/>
35 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BU5F6s2M2us>
36 <https://twitter.com/HondurasNow/status/1522218048236572675>
37 <https://confidencialhn.com/presentan-iniciativa-para-declarar-el-17-de-mayo-como-dia-nacional-contr-la-homofobia/>
38 <https://twitter.com/OACNUDH/status/1527799081065713667>
39 <https://twitter.com/RFKHumanRights/status/1523775250768433152>
40 <https://confidencialhn.com/honduras-reconoce-responsabilidad-en-el-asesinato-de-lider-trans-y-pide-perdon-a-su-familia/>
41 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/dh/37-igbi/1982-vicky-perdonanos>
42 <https://criterio.hn/xiomara-castro-promete-cambio-de-nombre-conforme-a-la-identidad-de-genero-a-traves-del-rnp/>
43 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/18/presentaran-proyecto-para-pretender-legalizar-el-matrimonio-igualitario/>
44 <https://proceso.hn/libre-no-apoya-el-matrimonio-entre-personas-del-mismo-sexo-aclara-diputado-sarmiento/>

was walking down a street in Comayagüela, accompanied by Rixi Madrid (29), who also suffered blows and was injured with a screwdriver."⁴⁵

Family members of LGBTQ+ defender Deninson Escalante were beaten and intimidated by members of the National Police at their home in the village of El Palenque, Choluteca.⁴⁶

Freedom of Expression and Journalists

Reporters without Borders published its yearly ranking on press freedom. "Honduras is ranked 165th for press freedom in 2022, out of 180 countries evaluated, being one of the four countries in a very serious situation, according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF). It remains one of the deadliest places for journalism in the Americas. "The purchase of large media by international investors, and of small media by the local political class, hinders pluralism", highlights the report of the international organization, released on World Press Freedom Day, which is commemorated this May 3."⁴⁷ Honduran journalists denounce the assassination of 90 journalists and two decades of impunity.⁴⁸ "Several Central and South American countries are experiencing a difficult context for the exercise of the right to Freedom of Expression, said on Radio Progreso the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, IACHR, Pedro Vaca."⁴⁹

"Taking 177 journalists as a sample, an academic study showed that aggressors use social networks as the main platform to discredit and intimidate journalists. The study was carried out in 16 departments of the country and seeks to visualize the problem of cyberbullying as an issue of social interest that has been little studied, but with strong repercussions. Among the most relevant data highlights that in Honduras, six out of ten journalists or social communicators received digital aggressions in 2021, the media used, social networks and WhatsApp. The aggressors hide in anonymity in 62% followed by 13% who are recognized by the victims as co-workers, bosses or even official institutions."⁵⁰

Journalist Carlos Eduardo Ávila Aguilera reported on alleged sexual harassment by a high school teacher. C-Libre denounced that he is on the verge of being captured and sent to prison for allegedly committing slander.⁵¹ Similar legal cases abound in Honduras to silence journalist. Congressman Darío Morán presented a bill to decriminalize crimes of honor this month.^{52 53}

"Journalist Gilda Silvestrucci, correspondent in Honduras for the Venezuelan television network Telesur and director of the program En La Plaza, continues to be the victim of threats and stigmatization through her social networks. In the last few hours Silvestrucci received messages that not only put her as a journalist at risk, but also her family. In her journalistic work, Silvestrucci gives coverage to facts related to the fight against corruption, human rights, environment and drug

45 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1491-atacan-a-golpes-y-hieren-de-gravedad-a-rix-i-garcia-defensora-de-los-derechos-lgtb>
46 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1495-en-allanamiento-ilegal-golpean-y-amenazan-de-muerte-a-familia-de-defensor-de-los-ddhh-de-choluteca>
47 <https://www.pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/amenazas/item/3369-clasificacion-de-libertad-de-prensa-2022-muy-grave-la-situacion-de-honduras>
48 <https://proceso.hn/gremio-periodistico-de-honduras-reprocha-dos-decadas-de-impunidad-y-90-periodistas-asesinados/>
49 <https://radioprogreso.hn/aplicacion-movil/cidh-preocupada-por-violaciones-a-la-libertad-de-expresion-por-quienes-se-supone-tienen-que-protegerla/>
50 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/libertad-de-expresion/1993-estudio-revela-seis-de-cada-diez-periodistas-son-ciberagredidos>
51 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1478-condena-penal-provoca-huida-de-periodista-sentenciado-a-la-carcel>
52 <https://proceso.hn/presentan-proyecto-de-ley-para-despenalizar-los-delitos-contra-el-honor-en-honduras/>
53 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/amenazas/item/3371-diputado-dario-moran-delitos-contra-el-honor-deben-ser-resueltos-en-la-instancia-civil>

trafficking, among other issues that affect the population and that, because of her approach, she has been the object of political persecution."⁵⁴

"In the framework of the Honduran Journalists' Day, the Association of Journalists of Honduras (CPH), the Honduran Press Association (APH), the Association of Media of Honduras (AMCH) and the Committee for Free Expression (C-Libre), jointly request the National Congress (CN) to repeal the decree of crimes against honor of the new Penal Code."⁵⁵ ⁵⁶ On the same day and as a bad omen, on the same day, the MP started criminalizing procedures against indigenous social communicator Sonia Pérez López.⁵⁷

"A photographer of the newspaper La Tribuna, of Tegucigalpa, was the victim of a criminal attack this Saturday morning, May 21, while he was carrying out his journalistic work on Kuwait Boulevard in the Honduran capital. The photojournalist, whose name is being withheld for his protection, was riding his motorcycle in that area of Comayagüela, collecting images of the disasters caused by the rains that hours before flooded several areas of the capital. Suddenly, a couple also riding a motorcycle intercepted him and after shooting him several times with a firearm, stole his vehicle."⁵⁸

Assassinations

C-Libre denounced the murder of social communicator Carlos Peralta in La Ceiba.⁵⁹

"The social communicator, Ricardo Avila, was the victim of a criminal attack, registered this Thursday, May 26, in the community of Santa Cruz, jurisdiction of the municipality of Marcovia in the department of Choluteca. The social communicator was shot in the head. (...) Seriously wounded, the social communicator was taken to a medical center in Tegucigalpa, where doctors have informed that his health condition is reserved."⁶⁰ Avila died in the hospital three days later.⁶¹ OACNUDH called on a swift, exhaustive and independent investigation into the murder of journalist Ricardo Ávila.⁶²

Violence against Women

"50.7% of women and girls living in Honduras, where they represent 51% of the population (9.5 million inhabitants), have suffered physical violence at some point in their lives, 48.9% have been victims of sexual harassment and 36.9% have received physical attacks that have put their lives at risk. These are some of the main data of the study "Social and institutional tolerance to violence against women, adolescents and girls", released on Tuesday by Spotlight, an initiative of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN), based on 220 interviews to women over 15 years old to know the incidence of male violence in Honduras."⁶³ By mid-May, at least 110 women

54 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1483-siguen-las-amenazas-y-las-acciones-de-intimidacion-contra-la-corresponsal-de-telesur-en-honduras>

55 <https://proceso.hn/cph-aph-y-c-libre-piden-derogacion-del-decreto-de-delitos-contra-el-honor/>

56 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/amenazas/item/3380-organizaciones-piden-que-congreso-agilice-despenalizacion-de-los-delitos-contra-el-honor>

57 <https://radioprogreso.hn.net/portada/ministerio-publico-criminaliza-a-corresponsal-de-radio-progreso/>

58 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/alertas/atentado/1490-atentan-contra-reportero-grafico-de-importante-diario-de-la-capital>

59 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1481-acribillado-a-tiros-muere-comunicador-social-de-la-ceiba-atlantida>

60 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/portada-alertas/1494-en-atentado-criminal-le-disparan-en-la-cabeza-a-comunicador-social-de-choluteca>

61 <http://www.conexihon.hn/index.php/libertad-de-expresion/1995-fallece-en-el-hospital-escuela-el-comunicador-social-ricardo-avila-despues-de-sufrir-atentado-criminal>

62 <https://twitter.com/OACNUDH/status/1531810682395672579>

63 <https://proceso.hn/la-mitad-de-las-mujeres-en-honduras-ha-sufrido-violencia-segun-un-estudio/>

had violently lost their lives in Honduras.⁶⁴ "The Minister of the Secretariat of Human Rights, Natalie Roque, affirmed that the government of Honduras is facing a national emergency due to the increase in murders and violence against women this year, which exceeds one hundred femicides."⁶⁵

Feminist and women's rights organizations highlighted the ups and downs of the Xiomara administration in its first 100 days (see also below under Varia). Among other things, they welcomed that Honduras started the ratification process of the optional protocol to CEDAW, but they also criticize the nomination of public officials linked to violations of the rights of women. They further presented a list of 9 demands.⁶⁶ On May 30, "[d]ozens of women raised their voices on Monday in Honduras to demand comprehensive sexual health and education, legalization of the Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) to prevent unwanted pregnancies in women and girls who are victims of rape, and an end to femicides. On the occasion of the International Day of Action for Women's Health, women, including feminists and human rights defenders, highlighted the importance of comprehensive health for women and affirmed that it is a "non-negotiable" human right."⁶⁷ Honduras has one of the harshest restrictions on abortion, even in the case of rape it is prohibited. The National Party wants to set in stone this restrictions by allowing a possible change only to a constitutional assembly. Women's rights organizations presented a constitutional challenge against this.⁶⁸

Political Prisoners

After four years of persecution, two of them inside a maximum-security prison, political prisoner Raúl Álvarez finally obtained his definitive letter of release.⁶⁹

Extractive Industries

"Organizations that are part of the Honduran Network for Escazú, met this May 6, 2022, with the Environmental Commission of the National Congress, where they demanded the ratification of the Escazú Agreement. This is a regional agreement on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, which came into force in Latin America on April 22, 2021."⁷⁰

"The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in recent months has made a series of pronouncements - such as the announcement of Honduras Free of Open Pit Mining - which to date have been only good intentions on paper, but without any concrete action. Criterio.hn consulted with three land and environmental advocates about their assessments regarding the performance of this secretariat, under the direction of Lucky Medina, in the protection of the country's environment. From the Centro Hondureño de Promoción Para el Desarrollo Comunitario (CEHPRODEC), lawyer Donald Hernández said that they see the political will of Mi Ambiente, as it is also known, in a

64 <https://confidencialhn.com/110-muertes-violentas-de-mujeres-en-2022-confirma-la-secretaria-de-asuntos-de-la-mujer/>

65 <https://criterio.hn/gobierno-de-honduras-en-emergencia-nacional-ante-aumento-de-asesinatos-contra-las-mujeres/>

66 <https://tiempo.hn/tribuna-mujeres-peticiones-presidenta-xiomara/>

67 <https://proceso.hn/mujeres-hondurenas-alzan-su-voz-para-exigir-salud-y-educacion-sexual-integral/>

68 <https://criterio.hn/organismo-internacional-presenta-amicus-para-defender-derechos-de-mujeres-a-interrumpir-embarazo-por-3-causales/>

69 <https://criterio.hn/otorgan-carta-de-libertad-definitiva-a-raul-alvarez-perseguido-politico-de-la-crisis-postelectoral-en-2017/>

70 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/contexto/item/3373-organizaciones-demandan-que-se-inicie-la-discusion-de-la-ratificacion-del-acuerdo-de-escazu>

positive light. However, this has not yet translated into progress and actions through which firm steps are taken to safeguard nature."⁷¹

Mining

Radio Progreso reported on the newest attempt by the mining company Los Pinares to white-wash their operations. "In a town hall meeting held in the La Laguna sector, the Mayor's Office of Tocoa, Colón, approved a "Community Social Compensation Agreement", so that the mining company Inversiones Los Pinares of Lenir Pérez, will be in charge of building the school, the hammock bridge and the opening of the street demanded by the citizens. (...) For his part, the councilman of Tocoa, Juan López, said in Radio Progreso that the agreement is an act of corruption between the mayor Adán Fúnez and the mining company Inversiones Los Pinares, which will serve to deepen even more the levels of violence faced by the citizens in Colón, placing at greater risk those who are defending the rivers and the mountains. (...) Pedro Landa, an environmentalist, said on Radio Progreso that the agreement approved in an open town hall, where the municipality gives powers to Inversiones Los Pinares to develop community projects, is a perverse act of corruption that seeks to legitimize the mining company and turn it into a necessity for the communities."⁷²

"The Maya Chortí people of the community of Azacualpa in La Unión, Copán, presented a letter to the Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment (MiAmbiente), demanding a clarification and rectification in relation to the publication of what they qualify as false information regarding the suspension of mining activity in the area. The document addressed to the head of MiAmbiente, Lucky Medina, states that the publication made on May 12, which states that the suspension of the mining plant owned by Minerales de Occidente S.A. (Minosa) is false. Therefore, they demand that in addition to the clarification and rectification, Medina as head of MiAmbiente "abandon his elusive behavior" and "assume his decisive role in repairing damages and sanctioning Aura Minerals/Minosa for the violations to the fundamental rights of the Maya Chortí indigenous community".⁷³

On May 16, several Garífuna communities sent out a joint statement rejecting mining on their land.⁷⁴

ZEDEs

The promise regarding the ousting of the ZEDEs seems less straightforward than some hoped (see also last month). "The promise of Xiomara Castro's government to expel the repudiated and unconstitutional Employment and Economic Development Zones (ZEDE), installed during the governments imposed after the coup d'état and promoted by the extradited Juan Orlando Hernández seems to have become demagoguery. After the investor of the ZEDE Próspera and Morazán, Massimo Mazzone, called Hondurans parasites, now the self-styled investors of these regimes,

⁷¹ <https://criterio.hn/voluntad-politica-de-secretaria-de-mi-ambiente-aun-no-se-plasma-en-acciones/>

⁷² <https://radioprogreso.hn/aplicacion-movil/com-proyectos-comunitarios-municipalidad-de-tocoa-colon-busca-lavar-cara-de-minera/>

⁷³ <https://criterio.hn/poblacion-maya-chorti-de-azacualpa-presenta-escrito-ante-falsa-accion-de-miambiente/>

⁷⁴ <https://twitter.com/ofraneh/status/1526312149307510784>

socialize with government officials stating that they are willing to stay under the conditions of Honduran laws."⁷⁵ ContraCorriente also reported on this. "Last April 20, the National Congress repealed the Organic Law of Employment and Economic Development Zones (ZEDE) and other related decrees. Now, after President Xiomara Castro sanctioned these decrees, the companies located in the ZEDE must register in one of the special regimes in force in Honduras with instructions from the Secretariat of Development, and, in addition, the different Secretariats of State must declassify all the information about them after the repeal of the Law of Secrecy."⁷⁶ Additionally, the men behind the ZEDE pretend not to be impressed by the congressional repeal. "The recently appointed technical secretary of the Employment and Economic Development Zone (ZEDE) Próspera in Roatán, Jorge Colindres, assured that "the ZEDes will continue to operate for many decades even after their repeal". Colindres argues the continuity of the controversial project to the guarantee of legal security that the State of Honduras must ensure them despite any social and political conflict, based on international treaties and stability contracts."⁷⁷

Agriculture

C-Libre denounced the intimidation of the peasant group Nueve de Noviembre in Santa Ana de Yusguare, Choluteca, by the businessman Argentina Diaz. "Since 2012 the farmers have been doing the corresponding procedures for the recovery and legalization of the land at the National Agrarian Institute, but in 2014 they were evicted at the request of Argentina Diaz, who claims to be the owner of the property. Heber Baca assures that this is not true and that the owner of Antar, used false documents. Last March 25, after having verified that Diaz is not the owner of the land, the farmers returned and are convinced that INA will grant them the property title, because this institution is only waiting for the sentence in favor of the State. The peasant says that the situation is not easy and that Argentina Díaz uses the repressive organs of the State and some 80 employees of the company, who armed with machetes come to the land to demand that they leave. He indicated that among them there are five security guards who carry firearms at all times."⁷⁸

CESPAD presented an analysis on the agrarian conflict in the Aguán Valley and why the land-owning elites are attacking the negotiation process set up by the new administration.⁷⁹ ARCAH denounced the poultry company El Cortijo, for the systematic acts of aggression against defender that seek to stop the contamination and destruction of the Choluteca River.⁸⁰ CNTC sent out an alert that sixty families of the CNTC campesino group "Las Galileas" in Jutiapa, Atlantida have been under intimidation and threats by heavily armed men since Sunday.⁸¹

75 <https://criterio.hn/las-zede-seguiran-operando-justificadas-en-que-se-someteran-a-las-leves-de-honduras/>

76 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/05/las-zede-en-honduras-deberan-someterse-a-regimenes-especiales-ya-existentes-en-el-pais/>

77 <https://criterio.hn/secretario-zede-prospera-asegura-que-esta-continuar-pese-a-su-derogatoria/>

78 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/alertas/intimidacion/1476-con-volarles-las-cabezas-intimidan-a-campesinos-del-grupo-19-de-noviembre>

79 <https://cespad.org.hn/2022/05/10/coyuntura-desde-los-territorios-por-que-las-elites-regionales-atacan-el-proceso-de-negociacion-en-el-bajo-aguan/>

80 <https://criterio.hn/arcach-denuncia-a-empresa-avicola-el-cortijo-por-intenciones-de-manipulacion-y-agresiones-sistematicas/>

81 <https://im-defensoras.org/2022/05/alerta-urgente-honduras-hombres-con-armas-de-alto-calibre-mantienen-bajo-zozobra-a-mas-de-60-defensoras/>

Corruption and Its Enemies

On May 6, the UN informed about the arrival of its exploratory mission for a UN-backed anti-corruption mission. "To this end, the technical mission will hold meetings with government actors, institutions and various sectors of society. Subsequently, the mission will prepare a report with conclusions and recommendations for the Secretary General of the United Nations regarding the next steps to support Honduras in the important area of the fight against impunity and corruption."⁸² US ambassador Laura Dogu announced that they support such a mission which should be "solid and lasting".⁸³ ⁸⁴ On May 8, the mission arrived in Honduras.⁸⁵ "Representatives of the Technical Evaluation Mission of the United Nations Agency (UN) who are in the country to know the scenario prior to the installation of an International Commission against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (CICIH), have described the meetings in the Central American country as "very productive".⁸⁶ "The spokesman for the Technical Evaluation Mission of the United Nations (UN), Andres Salazar, said Wednesday, according to initial surveys he has conducted with various sectors, have told him that an international commission is required to fight corruption in Honduras."⁸⁷ The UN exploratory mission concluded its visit in Honduras on May 13 with a meeting with president Xiomara Castro. "According to the Minister of Transparency, if what the United Nations proposes after the report presented by the exploratory mission that came to the country is positive, a memorandum of understanding will be signed and steps will be taken to negotiate an agreement that will allow the installation of Ciccih in Honduras."⁸⁸ Transparency Minister Edmundo Orellano stated that a possible UN anti-corruption mission would be entitled to investigate the government itself without restrictions.⁸⁹ ⁹⁰

On May 16, a judge confirmed the "definitive confiscation of 21 goods and financial products seized from former police commissioner Ambrosio Maradiaga Ordóñez, who last January was granted a definitive dismissal prior to the opening of his trial. This was due to the questioned reforms approved last year to the Special Anti-Money Laundering Law by the National Congress". After the initial deception, yesterday's ruling is seen as a success in the fight against corruption.⁹¹

This June, the electoral process of the new Supreme Court judges will start, a key body will be the nominating body set up of representatives of seven sectors and which will have to present to Congress at least 45 candidates.⁹² Libre congressman Ramón Barrios assured that Congress would have the opinion ready for the selection of candidates for the new Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) before its summer break in June.⁹³ The CNA highlighted the importance to have an independent nomination committee for the candidates.⁹⁴ Contracorriente also reported on this and the equally important Attorney General election.⁹⁵

⁸² <https://honduras.un.org/es/180524-comunicado-sobre-mision-de-evaluacion-tecnica>

⁸³ <https://proceso.hn/eeuu-apoya-una-comision-anticorrupcion-solida-y-duradera-para-honduras/>

⁸⁴ <https://twitter.com/USAmbHonduras/status/1522606977326583808>

⁸⁵ <https://proceso.hn/mision-de-onu-inicia-visita-a-honduras-para-evaluar-peticion-anticorrupcion/>

⁸⁶ <https://proceso.hn/enviado-de-la-onu-dice-que-ha-tenido-reuniones-muy-productivas-en-escaneo-previo-a-instalar-la-cicih/>

⁸⁷ <https://proceso.hn/vocero-de-la-onu-dice-que-segun-primeros-sondeos-en-honduras-se-quiere-una-cicih-independiente-e-imparcial/>

⁸⁸ <https://proceso.hn/mision-de-onu-concluye-visita-exploratoria-a-honduras-tras-reunion-con-castro/>

⁸⁹ <https://tiempo.hn/edmundo-orellana-cicih-investigara-sin-restriccion/>

⁹⁰ <https://criterio.hn/cicih-tendra-inmunidad-y-podra-investigara-a-cualquier-gobierno/>

⁹¹ <https://confidencialhn.com/confiscacion-definitiva-de-21-bienes-de-ambrosio-maradiaga-ordonez-representa-un-sustancial-avance-contra-la-corrupcion-policial/>

⁹² <https://www.expedientepublico.org/inicia-el-debate-para-que-la-corte-suprema-en-honduras-no-siga-en-manos-de-politicos/>

⁹³ <https://proceso.hn/para-antes-de-junio-tendremos-dictamenes-para-elegir-autoridades-de-csj-diputado-barrios/>

⁹⁴ <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/23/proponen-reformar-la-evaluacion-de-postulantes-y-despolitizar-la-eleccion-de-la-corte/>

⁹⁵ <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/22/cabildos-para-instalacion-de-cicih-agudizan-la-lucha-por-controlar-csj-y-mp/>

When the new administration took over at the beginning of the year, various corruption cases from the JOH regime came to light. In one case, it involved the Administrative Office for Seized Goods. Its former head, Francisco Ernesto Ruiz Nieto, was sent to trial for corruption on May 23.⁹⁶

The Onslaught against the Anti-Corruption Bodies

"The President of the National Congress, Luis Redondo, presented (..) a draft decree that seeks to strengthen the Specialized Prosecutor Unit Against Corruption Networks (UFERCO). The draft decree authorizes UFERCO, a dependency of the Public Prosecutor's Office, to exercise criminal action ex officio in cases of high impact corruption, without the prior approval of the Attorney General of the Republic."⁹⁷ This was widely welcomed by anti-corruption specialists in Honduras.⁹⁸

⁹⁹ But the defenders of the old system also surfaced criticizing the attempt to give more autonomy to UFERCO.¹⁰⁰

Congress approved this important bill on May 27.^{101 102 103} The defenders of the old system had been rallying against this bill for days¹⁰⁴ and once approved, Nationalists members of Congress left Congress in protest.^{105 106} UFERCO's Luis Santos found clear words for them. "People afraid of the strengthening of UFERCO are those involved in corrupt acts."¹⁰⁷ The issue also brought to light that the age-old Liberal-National-Party-Alliance is to some extent still intact. Liberal Party members also walked out of Congress after the majority voted in favor of a strengthened UFERCO.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, Congress got rid of shady trusts led by private banks. These funds will now be administered by the Ministry of Finance as part of the Treasury's funds.¹⁰⁹

Palmerola

"The president of the National Congress, Luis Redondo, appointed a Special Multiparty Commission to investigate the contract for the construction of the Palmerola International Airport, where flooding due to rains occurred recently."¹¹⁰

Mobile Hospitals

On May 16, the Sentencing Court on corruption matters issued the resolution of the oral and public trial against the former director of Inversiones Estratégicas de Honduras (Invest-H), Marco Bográn and the former administrator Alex Moraes for the case of the purchase of mobile hospitals."¹¹¹ Both were found guilty in the mobile hospitals corruption case.¹¹² The MP was not satisfied with the

96 <https://confidencialhn.com/mp-obtiene-auto-de-formal-procesamiento-contra-exdirector-de-la-oabi/>

97 <https://proceso.hn/presentan-decreto-para-que-la-uferco-tenga-accion-penal-sin-autorizacion-de-cabezas-del-mp/>

98 <https://tiempo.hn/reacciones-decreto-independencia-uferco/>

99 <https://confidencialhn.com/indican-que-es-importante-concederle-independencia-a-la-uferco-para-impulsar-la-investigacion/>

100 <https://proceso.hn/otorgar-supra-poderes-a-la-uferco-es-ilegal-y-pone-paralela-al-mp/>

101 https://twitter.com/Congreso_HND/status/1530091306092986369

102 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/congreso-nacional-aprueba-decreto-que-permite-a-uferco-actuar-de-oficio-en-casos-de-corrupcion/>

103 <https://eliberador.hn/2022/05/27/autonomia-de-uferco-es-garantia-constitucional-penalistas/>

104 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/27/jueza-de-sentencias-califica-como-inconstitucional-otorgar-independencia-a-la-uferco/>

105 https://twitter.com/Congreso_HND/status/1530334371227607041

106 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/27/bancada-opositora-asegura-que-otorgarle-independencia-a-la-uferco-es-un-duro-golpe-a-la-institucionalidad-del-ministerio-publico/>

107 https://twitter.com/Congreso_HND/status/1530276898625966080

108 <https://criterio.hn/conservador-partido-liberal-conserva-alianza-con-el-partido-nacional-que-lo-condujo-a-su-desplome/>

109 <https://criterio.hn/unos-19-fideicomisos-fueron-eliminados-a-solicitud-de-xiomara-castro-fondos-no-seguiran-en-banca-privada/>

110 <https://confidencialhn.com/congreso-nacional-nombra-comision-legislativa-para-investigar-contrato-de-palmerola/>

111 <https://proceso.hn/este-martes-dictaran-fallo-en-juicio-en-caso-de-hospitales-moviles/>

112 <https://radioprogressohn.net/portada/caso-hospitales-moviles-un-llamado-a-transparentar-gestion-en-salud-publica/>

ruling. "The Public Prosecutor's Office, after arduous investigative work and with 74 pieces of evidence presented at trial, demonstrated the criminal responsibility of the first two involved in the Mobile Hospitals case; however, the ruling will be subject to a cassation appeal due to the fact that the sentencing body has been more than lenient in terms of the legal qualification of the conducts attributed to the accused ex-officials."¹¹³ ¹¹⁴ The ruling sparked discussions both about the nefarious consequences of the Penal Code reform under JOH¹¹⁵ and about the intellectual authors. "Although it has emerged that the former director of Inversiones Estratégicas de Honduras (Invest-H), Marco Bográn, and the former administrator, Alex Moraes, have been found guilty of the overpriced purchase of seven mobile hospitals, the "big fish" who ran the colossal swindle remain unindicted in total impunity. Names such as the former president facing trial for drug trafficking in the United States, Juan Orlando Hernández, and the former president of the National Congress, Mauricio Oliva, came to light in the overpriced purchase of the hospital modules, popularly known as "mobile cans"."¹¹⁶

On May 31, "[t]he Public Prosecutor's Office and the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Honduras (PGR) requested the Corruption Sentencing Court to sentence Marco Bográn, former director of Inversiones Estratégicas de Honduras (Invest-H), accused of the fraudulent purchase of seven mobile hospitals, to a maximum sentence of 11 years plus 8 months in prison and a monetary penalty of over 2,200 million Lempiras".¹¹⁷

State Security Forces

At the beginning of May, the National Police started the reintegration process of some of its members purged under the JOH regime. "Through a press release, the police institution indicated that the reinstatement will be framed within a certification of suitability, integrity and institutional roots."¹¹⁸ "The reintegration of former officers of the National Police and members of the Armed Forces of Honduras (FF.AA.) seeks to expand the community policing system for the benefit of the population, according to a statement issued by the Secretariat of State in the Office of Security."¹¹⁹ ContraCorriente critically covered the reintegration. "Five police officers were killed between April 23 and May 2, bringing to 15 the number of police officers killed in confrontations so far in 2022, according to data provided to Contracorriente by the National Police's Strategic Communications Office. On the other hand, this armed institution announced on May 4 the beginning of the process to reintegrate purged police officers in order to "increase the number of police officers", but not only that, they will also incorporate military personnel who were discharged."¹²⁰

Congress approved important reforms to the Transparency Law this month to support the fight against corruption. Human rights lawyer and defender Joaquín Mejía welcomed the reforms but demanded its application also to state security forces in matters of human rights.¹²¹

¹¹³ <https://www.mp.hn/publicaciones/mp-disconforme-con-primera-condena-en-el-caso-hospitales-moviles/>

¹¹⁴ <https://criterio.hn/mp-disconforme-con-sentencia-contra-exfuncionarios-de-invest-h-favorecidos-por-codigo-penal-de-la-impunidad>

¹¹⁵ <https://criterio.hn/codigo-penal-que-aprobo-partido-nacional-favorecera-a-marco-bogran-y-alex-moraes-en-estafa-de-hospitales-moviles/>

¹¹⁶ <https://criterio.hn/los-peces-gordos-de-la-estafa-de-los-hospitales-moviles-permanecen-en-impunidad/>

¹¹⁷ <https://criterio.hn/fiscalia-y-procuraduria-piden-pena-11-anos-de-prision-y-sancion-de-2200-millones-contra-marco-bogran/>

¹¹⁸ <https://www.radiohrn.hn/policia-nacional-inicia-protocolo-reintegro-policias-depurados-honduras>

¹¹⁹ <https://confidencialhn.com/reingreso-de-exfuncionarios-policiales-y-miembros-de-las-ff-aa-buscaria-ampliar-sistema-de-policia-comunitaria/>

¹²⁰ <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/05/asesinato-de-policias-y-reintegro-de-agentes-depurados-sacude-a-la-policia-nacional/>

¹²¹ <https://ellibertador.hn/2022/05/28/abogado-pide-que-funcionarios-rindan-cuentas-de-gestion-en-dd-hh/>

Assassinations

Prosecutor Karen Almeydas was murdered at the end of the month in Nacaome, Valle. "The 39-year-old woman, who worked as an environmental prosecutor in southern Honduras, was returning from exercising at a gym near her home when she was attacked."¹²² UFERCO's Luis Santos condemned her murder and called her "a true heroine, a dreamer, an idealist".¹²³

Penitentiary System

"The Public Prosecutor's Office obtained convictions for Wilmer Obdulio López Irías, José Víctor Mejía, Santos Soriano López and Rito Yáñez Licona, after the repetition of the oral and public trial for the death of 360 inmates who died in the fire at the prison in Comayagua."^{124 125}

Militarization

The Honduran Armed Forces created the first Green Battalion of Environmental Protection. "The Green Battalions will have as specific missions the protection of protected areas and forest reserves."^{126 127} In addition, they will actively participate in the fight against drug trafficking, illegal logging, fishing and mining." In the past, the Armed Forces played quite the opposite role - the JOH-era mining law even states that their budget is linked to increase income from the extractive industries. Some skepticism is, therefore, warranted.

"President Xiomara Castro declared that six helicopters and two aircraft will be acquired to strengthen the Air Force, the announcement was criticized by the opposition."¹²⁸

International Community

Mexican president AMLO visited Honduras this month and met with president Xiomara.¹²⁹ During his visit to Honduras, AMLO committed himself to support Honduras in oil exploration and exploitation in the Mosquitia and the Caribbean Sea.¹³⁰

Proceso Digital reports that the Xiomara administration requested some \$220 millions from the BCIE for fuel subsidies. The BCIE will hold a meeting on this on June 3. A request by the National Electric Energy Company (ENEE) for \$250 million was denied by the BCIE.¹³¹

World Bank vice-president for Latin American and the Caribbean Carlos Felipe Jaramillo visited Honduras for three days.¹³²

122 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/sucesos/karen-almendares-fiscal-honduras-crimen-latinoamerica-ola-violencia-luz-marina-marcelo-pecci-IE8363956>

123 https://twitter.com/Luis_Santos_C/status/1530629561502748673

124 <https://confidencialhn.com/mp-logra-sentencia-por-la-muerte-de-360-privados-de-libertad-en-el-centro-penal-de-comayagua/>

125 <https://criterio.hn/exdirector-y-exencargado-de-llaves-de-penal-de-comayagua-son-declarados-culpables-por-muerte-de-360-reos-calcinados-en-2012/>

126 <https://confidencialhn.com/honduras-contara-con-el-primer-batallon-verde-de-proteccion-ambiental/>

127 <https://confidencialhn.com/presidente-xiomara-castro-realiza-el-lanzamiento-de-los-batallones-verdes-de-proteccion-ambiental/>

128 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/31/cuestionan-al-ejecutivo-tras-anuncio-de-adquisicion-de-seis-helicopteros-y-dos-aeronaves-para-las-ffaa/>

129 <https://confidencialhn.com/presidente-de-mexico-llega-a-honduras-para-reunirse-con-presidente-xiomara-castro/>

130 <https://criterio.hn/amlo-promete-apoyar-a-honduras-en-exploracion-y-explotacion-petrolera-en-la-mosquitia-y-mar-caribe/>

131 <https://proceso.hn/honduras-ha-solicitado-220-millones-al-bcie-como-apoyo-del-pago-de-subsidio-de-los-combustibles/>

132 <https://confidencialhn.com/vicepresidente-del-banco-mundial-para-america-latina-y-el-caribe-visita-honduras/>

Israel

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz published an opinion piece by Eitay Mack on the Netanyahu-JOH connection. "If there was any justice in the world, the DEA plane should have made a stop at Ben Gurion Airport to pick up former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and his government ministers and officials from the foreign and defense ministries who helped Hernández survive in power as long as he did. If not for Hernández's close ties with Netanyahu, and the bargaining that Israel engaged in surrounding the moving of the Honduran Embassy to Jerusalem, Hernández's political career would probably have ended some years ago."¹³³

US

MADJ and over 60 more organizations and social movements called on the US treasury to oppose the financing of a hydroelectric project on the Jilamito River.¹³⁴

Last month, the topic here was a perceived closeness of the US to the Xiomara administration. In May, some ruptures came to light. There was a public disagreement between the US ambassador Laura Dogu and the Xiomara administration on energy reform (see below under Varia). Additionally, ambassador Dogu met with Attorney General Óscar Fernando Chinchilla, a disputed figure in Honduras for protecting JOH for years against drug trafficking investigations. This took place while some politicians were seeking to have him impeached.¹³⁵ Ambassador Dogu, meanwhile, highlighted the importance of an independent MP, something they did not care about under JOH.¹³⁶ ¹³⁷ At the end of the month, she also met with another close JOH-ally, the President of the Supreme Court, Rolando Argueta.¹³⁸

"The former Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Honduras, Heide Fulton, went from being a key figure in support of the illegal and arbitrary actions of former President Juan Orlando Hernandez, who became her ally, to participating in forums where it is recognized that Honduras was captured by a criminal structure. The participation of the diplomat in the forum called "Criminal Structures Behind State Capture" held by the National Anti-Corruption Council (CNA) in Washington D.C., United States, generated discomfort in part of the citizenry due to her direct participation in the fraudulent elections of 2017 that allowed "JOH", as Hernández is popularly known, to arbitrarily establish himself in power by consummating his illegal reelection."¹³⁹

EU

The EU ambassador Jaime Segura announced that they would donate 128 million Euros to fight poverty in Honduras.¹⁴⁰

133 <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-honduras-and-the-jerusalem-embassy-how-netanyahu-backed-arms-and-cocaine-deals-1.10773452>

134 <https://twitter.com/MovAmplioHn/status/1527025620785430528>

135 <https://confidencialhn.com/consideran-que-es-difcil-que-se-pueda-realizar-un-juicio-politico-al-fiscal-general-y-magistrados-de-la-csj/>

136 <https://proceso.hn/embajadora-dogu-aboga-por-protger-independencia-del-ministerio-publico%ef%bf%bc/>

137 https://twitter.com/MP_Honduras/status/1521639745327149057

138 <https://confidencialhn.com/presidente-de-la-corte-suprema-de-justicia-se-reune-con-embajadora-de-estados-unidos/>

139 <https://criterio.hn/de-respalda-ilegal-reeleccion-y-ser-aliada-de-joh-heide-fulton-salto-a-reconocer-estructura-criminal-corrupcia/>

140 <https://www.elpais.hn/2022/05/21/ue-donara-e128-millones-para-contrarrestar-pobreza-en-honduras/>

The EU and Honduras celebrated the ten years anniversary of the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America. Critical voices were not present.¹⁴¹

Drug Trafficking

Nine years ago, Honduras extradited for the first time a drug trafficker, Carlos Arnoldo “El Negro” Lobo, to the US. His prison sentence is about to conclude.¹⁴² According to Security Minister Ramón Sabillón, there are still 37 extradition requests pending.¹⁴³ On May 21, Honduran security forces captured another Honduran, Rafael Eduardo Cáceres Soto, requested by the US for extradition for drug trafficking.¹⁴⁴ Also this month, “Maribel Espinoza, congresswoman of the Salvador Party of Honduras (PSH), denounced that the previous government disappeared documentation related to extradition requests. In addition, there is inconsistency between the information in the hands of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Security Secretariat”.¹⁴⁵

InSight Crime reported on the recent announcement by the US to offer a \$5 million reward for information leading to the arrest of leaders of the Montes Bobadilla drug clan. “The State Department alleges that Herlinda Bobadilla, 61, and her sons Tito and Juan Carlos Montes Bobadilla are the current leaders of the group, which moves drugs and launders illicit proceeds throughout Central America, Mexico and the United States. Since the arrest of Herlinda Bobadilla's third son, Noe Montes Bobadilla, in 2017, their roles in the organization “have grown significantly,” according to a May 2 State Department news release.”¹⁴⁶ On May 15, Honduran security forces captured the head of the clan, Herlinda Bobadilla.¹⁴⁷ In the confrontation that accompanied the capture, her son, Tito Montes Bobadilla, also wanted for drug trafficking, was killed.^{148 149} The same day, a court ordered pre-trial detention for Herlinda Bobadilla.¹⁵⁰

On May 10, the former police commissioner Juan Carlos “El Tigre” Bonilla was extradited to the US.¹⁵¹ The US Department of Justice published a press release on tit. “DEA Administrator Anne Milgram said: “Former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez would not have risen to power and successfully benefited from massive drug proceeds had it not been for his expansive network of corrupt associates. These associates, including Bonilla Valladares, likewise exploited their positions to traffic cocaine to the United States and violently protect other politically connected drug traffickers, all for their own personal gains. Bonilla Valladares further betrayed the Honduran people by using his law enforcement badge to cover for his crimes. Bonilla Valladares’s extradition shows the world once again that corrupt officials cannot hide behind their positions.”¹⁵² Bonilla's hearing was set for June 10. He will be defended by a pro bono lawyer as he claimed not

141 <https://confidencialhn.com/exportaciones-de-honduras-a-europa-han-crecido-desde-la-entrada-en-vigencia-del-acuerdo-de-asociacion-con-la-union-europea/>

142 <https://confidencialhn.com/a-las-puertas-de-recobrar-su-libertad-el-negro-lobo-primer-narcotraficante-hondureno-extraditado-a-ee-uu/>

143 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/entrevista-ramon-sabillon-estructuras-criminales-partidos-politicos-honduras-NM8169078>

144 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/capturan-a-otro-extraditable/>

145 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/25/comision-de-diputados-detecta-extravio-de-informacion-en-solicitudes-de-extradicion/>

146 <https://insightcrime.org/news/us-bounties-hit-honduran-transportista-family/>

147 <https://proceso.hn/desarticulan-clan-montes-bobadilla-tras-captura-de-su-jefa/>

148 <https://confidencialhn.com/policia-logra-captura-de-la-extraditable-herlinda-bobadilla-y-tres-personas-mas/>

149 <https://tiempo.hn/autopsia-fito-montes-murio-desagrado-balazo-tibia/>

150 <https://tiempo.hn/arresto-provisional-a-herlinda-bobadilla/>

151 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/extraditado-juan-carlos-el-tigre-bonilla/>

152 <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/former-chief-honduran-national-police-extradited-united-states-drug-trafficking-and>

to have sufficient funds to pay for his defense.^{153 154} On May 26, the MP requested the seizure of properties from the extradited former police chief Jan Carlos "El Tigre" Bonilla.¹⁵⁵ They found some 10 million Lempiras which could not be accounted for.¹⁵⁶

A member of the Armed Forces was sent to prison. He had trafficked drugs into prisons when the Armed Forces were still responsible for the prisons under the JOH regime.¹⁵⁷

Jeff Ernst reported for The Guardian on Honduras' development from a cocaine way station to a producer.¹⁵⁸

JOH

JOH's trial in New York continued on May 10.¹⁵⁹ In preparation of this, David C. Adams and Jeff Ernst report on his defense team. "They call themselves a legal 'Dream Team' and plan to call Donald Trump, Joe Biden and Barack Obama to testify in favor of their client. That's the opening salvo from the defense team of former Honduran president, Juan Orlando Hernandez, two weeks after he was extradited to stand trial in New York accused of operating the country as a "narco state." (...) Facing life in prison if convicted, Hernandez's legal team have gone on the offensive from day one, defending their client in the media as a hero in the war on drugs and bragging that they will achieve an historic victory in court."¹⁶⁰

During the hearing, JOH declared "not guilty".¹⁶¹ His next appearance before court will be late September for the evidentiary hearing and the trial was tentatively set for January 17, 2023.¹⁶² At the same time, JOH's allies in Honduras were also feeling more heat. "The special commission of the National Congress in charge of investigating the actions of the justice operators in extradition matters, recommended on Tuesday to impeach the president of the Judiciary, Rolando Argueta, and the Attorney General, Oscar Chinchilla."^{163 164 165 166 167} On May 12, the head of the commission, congressman Ramón Barrios, denounced receiving death threats.¹⁶⁸

153 https://twitter.com/Prohn_Honduras/status/1524422102882861056

154 <https://criterio.hn/con-abogado-pagado-con-dinero-de-estadounidenses-tigre-bonilla-se-presenta-a-primera-audiencia/>

155 https://twitter.com/MP_Honduras/status/1529797297281896449

156 <https://criterio.hn/mas-de-10-millones-sin-justificar-encuentran-al-extraditado-tigre-bonilla/>

157 <https://www.laprensa.hn/sucesos/condenan-a-militar-que-permitia-ingreso-de-droga-de-la-ms-13-a-carcel-IC8172864>

158 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/24/honduras-cocaine-production-narcotics-central-america>

159 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/juan-orlando-herandez-audiencia-narcotrafico-nueva-york-datos-EC8051754>

160 <https://www.univision.com/univision-news/united-states/former-honduran-president-herandez-legal-dream-team-new-york>

161 <https://www.univision.com/noticias/narcotrafico/juan-orlando-herandez-declara-no-culpable-cargos-drogas-armas-de-fuego-nueva-york?kdjhg>

162 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/juan-orlando-herandez-que-sigue-caso-juicio-audiencia-nueva-york-narcotrafico-NY8076690>

163 <https://proceso.hn/comision-del-cn-recomienda-aplicar-juicio-politico-al-titular-de-la-csj-y-al-fiscal-general/>

164 <https://criterio.hn/comision-del-congreso-demanda-juicio-politico-contra-presidente-de-la-corte-y-fiscal-general/>

165 <https://criterio.hn/un-ministerio-publico-infructuoso-se-declara-listo-para-apoyar-una-mision-anticorrupcion/>

166 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/contexto/item/3377-institucionalidad-en-honduras-bajo-cero-graves-actuaciones-de-operadores-de-justicia-involucrados-en-el-proceso-de-extradiciones>

167 <https://www.expedientepublico.org/honduras-informe-del-congreso-nacional-expone-sistema-de-justicia-al-servicio-del-narcotrafico/>

168 <https://criterio.hn/comision-del-congreso-que-pide-juicio-politico-contra-fiscal-oscar-chinchilla-denuncia-amenazas-a-muerte/>

Varia

Xiomara Administration

The new administration passed its 100-day mark with many comments on its success, challenges and disappointments.^{169 170 171 172} There was also some criticism of this ritualized ceremony to look back on the first 100 days of a new government, especially when followed after 12 years of a narcodictatorship with all the challenges that included.¹⁷³ President Xiomara also presented a review from her perspective.¹⁷⁴ She further commented on the insecurity-generating machine still active in Honduras. "She stressed that "without State violence and respecting due process, we must find ways to repair the damage caused by the partners of this system that protects corrupt and drug traffickers". She warned that she will confront those who continue to exercise power through violence, whether economic or otherwise, "it is public knowledge that there is an organic response to promote insecurity in Honduras. We have knowledge of how this criminal structure that permeated the State of Honduras until it became a failed state and continues to be active and conspiring, is sustained and operates".¹⁷⁵

May Day

Hondurans took to the streets on May Day. President Xiomara and Congress' president Luis Redondo accompanied the march in San Pedro Sula.^{176 177 178 179}

Amnesty

"Joaquín Amador, who is in charge of political prisoners, stated that around seven thousand inmates could be released by means of a pardon. "The pardon is only given by the Presidency of the Republic, but it must pass through a filter depending on the person's crime. One of the requirements is that they have served a certain part of their sentence, the elderly or terminally ill because they are no longer a threat to society," he said."¹⁸⁰

Electricity

At the beginning of the month, the government and private energy generators began a dialogue to review the contracts for electricity by the private sector. This was preceded by a draft Energy Law before Congress which states that the government would be able to acquire the plants if their owners do not accept a reduction in the rates at which they sell electricity.¹⁸¹ The draft bill further

169 <https://radioprogreso.hn.net/portada/a-100-dias-se-reconocen-logros-y-se-plantean-desafios-al-gobierno-de-xiomara-castro/>

170 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yfr73TnAnMM>

171 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/elheraldoplus/interactivos/xiomara-castro-100-dias-promesas-KX7990783>

172 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/07/cien-dias-de-deudas-para-las-mujeres-el-medioambiente-y-a-la-produccion-agricola/>

173 <https://www.defensoresenlinea.com/es-injusto-y-ridiculo-valorar-100-dias-del-gobierno-de-xiomara-castro/>

174 <https://tiempo.hn/xiomara-castro-habla-en-cadena-nacional/>

175 <https://proceso.hn/existe-una-respuesta-organica-para-promover-la-inseguridad-en-honduras-dice-presidenta-castro%ef%bf%bc/>

176 <https://confidencial.hn.com/imagenes-clase-trabajadora-se-hace-sentir-este-dia-del-trabajador/>

177 <https://criterio.hn/trabajadores-de-honduras-marchan-en-compania-de-la-presidenta-xiomara-castro/>

178 <https://proceso.hn/xiomara-en-sps-y-mel-en-tegucigalpa-protagonizan-celebracion-del-dia-del-trabajador/>

179 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/contexto/item/3368-en-el-dia-del-trabajo-trabajo-estable-rescate-de-instituciones-publicas-privatizadas-combate-a-la-impunidad-y-desmilitarizacion-de-la-seguridad-publica>

180 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/24/preven-que-unos-siete-mil-reos-sean-indultados-por-la-presidenta/>

181 <https://proceso.hn/gobierno-y-generadores-comienzan-dialogo-sobre-precios-de-la-energia/>

aims to declare access to electricity as a human right.¹⁸² Additionally, on May 2, the Minister of Energy revealed that a complaint was filed before the civil court against the Honduras Energy Company (EEH) for considering the contract with the concessionaire as harmful and announced that a lawsuit for damages would be filed.¹⁸³ Three days later, EEH stated that they had not received a complaint but rather were considering legal against the State.¹⁸⁴ ¹⁸⁵ At the same time, Congress' president Luis Redondo denounced that under the JOH regime, contracts with energy companies were illegally approved and nominated a special congressional commission to investigate the contracts.¹⁸⁶ In one day back in 2014, Congress had approved 99 contracts and this even after Congress officially had stopped its session.¹⁸⁷ On May 9, Minister of Economic Development Pedro Barquero announced that they would revise some 20 contracts with energy companies.¹⁸⁸ At the end of the month, the number of contracts that would be revised rose to 240.¹⁸⁹

Finance Minister Rixi Moncada met with the US ambassador Laura Dogu to discuss the reforms to the energy sector.¹⁹⁰ Later on, the ambassador tweeted: "energy reform is critical to economic development. We are analyzing the energy proposal and as a writer we are concerned about the effect it will have on foreign investment and the independence of the regulatory agency." To this, Foreign Minister Enrique Reina replied: "Madam Ambassador, you have been welcomed with open arms. Energy reform is urgent for us as a State, it combats an inherited situation of corruption and poverty. We are concerned about your ill-advised opinion on domestic policy, which does not contribute to good relations with the United States."¹⁹¹¹⁹² A day later, Reina turned down the heat and said: "[W]e must put away any fear that the relationship will become complicated, on the contrary, I believe that we maintain a very frank and direct language with the United States with a lot of dignity in our relationship".¹⁹³ Meanwhile, Ambassador Dogu met with Energy Minister Erick Tejada to continue the discussions about the energy reforms¹⁹⁴ and Under Secretary Jose W. Fernandez tweeted: "The U.S. stands ready to work closely with Honduras to make the necessary reforms to keep the lights on and advance energy security for the people of Honduras. Taking time to sort out this complicated sector will pay huge economic dividends in the near term."¹⁹⁵ On May 6, Brian A. Nichols, Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, talked to president Xiomara.¹⁹⁶

While the US seemed very involved in the discussions, social movements had to demand their inclusion. "Representatives of several communities, gathered in the Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice, MADJ, are in the basement of the National Congress participating in a 72 hour fast to demand to be heard by the congressmen so that their opinions and assessments are taken into

182 <https://criterio.hn/presidencia-envia-proyecto-al-congreso-para-declarar-un-bien-y-derecho-humano-la-energia-electrica/>

183 <https://criterio.hn/gobierno-demanda-a-la-eeh-por-contrato-lesivo-contrato-estado/>

184 <https://confidencialhn.com/eeh-aclara-que-no-existe-demanda-del-estado-de-honduras-en-su-contrad-denuncia-pretension-de-proceso-de-expropiacion/>

185 <https://ellibertador.hn/2022/05/04/energia-honduras-anuncia-accion-legal-contrad-plan-energetico-del-gobierno/>

186 <https://criterio.hn/presidente-del-congreso-nombra-comision-para-investigar-contratos-de-energia-aprobados-de-manera-ilicita/>

187 <https://proceso.hn/presidente-del-cn-denuncia-fraude-en-votaciones-de-antecesores-para-aprobar-contratos-de-energia/>

188 <https://confidencialhn.com/al-menos-20-contratos-de-generacion-de-energia-termica-y-solar-seran-renegociados-asegura-el-ministro-de-desarrollo-economico/>

189 <https://confidencialhn.com/senalan-que-mas-de-240-contratos-de-energias-firmados-desde-el-ano-2000-seran-revisados/>

190 https://twitter.com/USAmbHonduras/status/1521243019894214656?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

191 <https://twitter.com/EnriqueReinaHN/status/1521621597324558339>

192 <https://criterio.hn/reforma-energetica-enfrenta-a-embajadora-de-ee-uu-y-al-gobierno-de-xiomara-castro/>

193 <https://confidencialhn.com/no-hay-temor-de-que-la-relacion-con-estados-unidos-se-complique-al-contrario-estamos-fortaleciendo-los-vinculos-canciller-reina/>

194 <https://confidencialhn.com/secretario-de-energia-y-embajadora-de-eua-dialogan-sobre-nueva-ley-de-energia/>

195 <https://confidencialhn.com/no-hay-temor-de-que-la-relacion-con-estados-unidos-se-complique-al-contrario-estamos-fortaleciendo-los-vinculos-canciller-reina/>

196 <https://twitter.com/WHAAssiSecy/status/1522662364440629248>

account in the discussion of the Energy Law."¹⁹⁷ Shortly afterwards, on May 12, Congress approved the new energy law making access to energy a human right.¹⁹⁸ "In the opinion of Víctor Fernández, of the Bufete Estudios para la Dignidad and coordinator of the Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad y la Justicia (MADJ), the energy reform approved by the National Congress "is an important step towards interrupting the privatizing route of the sector and recovering what has been plundered".¹⁹⁹

Migration

Over 80% more Hondurans were deported in the first months of 2022 compared to last year.²⁰⁰ 69% of deported Hondurans are considering leaving the country again.²⁰¹ According to FOSDEH, 600'000 Hondurans have been deported by the US in the last ten years.²⁰² "As proof that the United States is indeed an ally of Honduras, it should provide work visas, said Rodulio Perdomo".²⁰³

At the beginning of the month, "[t]he National Congress approved a bill to grant migratory amnesty for three months and exempt migrants passing through Honduras from the abusive payment of fines or surcharges by the migratory authorities".²⁰⁴ Pasos de Animal Grande reported on the need of a holistic approach to support deported Hondurans.²⁰⁵ More than 24'000 migrants have reached Honduras in the first four months of 2022 wishing to transit the country.²⁰⁶

Health Sector

"The Presidential Commission that analyzes and authorizes the agreements for the hiring of health personnel who were promised their appointment, many of whom were hired in the framework of the pandemic, holds weekly meetings to update how the process is going and the difficulties they are facing. There are 8234 people to be hired, including doctors, nurses, auxiliaries and personnel who have remained on the front line of the fight against Covid-19, of whom some five thousand appointment agreements have already been delivered, said Alan Pineda, Secretary General of the Health Secretariat, on Radio Progreso."²⁰⁷ (see last month)

Radio Progreso portrayed the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) - "an institution plundered and with little chance of success due to corruption".²⁰⁸ ContraCorriente reported on the recent worrisome development at the IHSS. "On Thursday, May 12, the board of directors of the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) appointed its new executive director, Dr. Gaspar Rodríguez. This followed the dismissal of Dr. Adriana Zúniga, who had promised a structural change in an institution that has been plundered by one of the largest acts of corruption in the last decade. Prior to her dismissal, Zúniga denounced threats from private security companies seeking to win bidding processes."²⁰⁹

197 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/comunidades-demandan-ser-escuchadas-en-discusion-de-la-ley-de-energia/>

198 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/congreso-nacional-aprueba-nueva-ley-de-energia/>

199 <https://criterio.hn/energia-se-convierte-en-derecho-humano-con-aprobacion-de-ambiciosa-ley-en-honduras/>

200 <https://confidencialhn.com/deportacion-de-migrantes-a-honduras-se-dispara-un-825-entre-enero-y-abril/>

201 <https://confidencialhn.com/el-69-de-los-deportados-a-honduras-piensa-en-volver-a-emigrar-segun-estudio/>

202 <https://confidencialhn.com/al-menos-600-mil-hondurenos-han-sido-deportados-de-ee-uu-en-los-ultimos-10-anos-fosdeh/>

203 <https://proceso.hn/fosdeh-pide-visas-de-trabajo-como-prueba-que-eeuu-es-un-aliado-de-honduras/>

204 <https://criterio.hn/cn-aprueba-ampnistia-migratoria-migrantes-ya-no-pagaran-multa-impuesta-por-migracion/>

205 <https://pasosdeanimalgrande.com/es-co/contexto/item/3374-honduras-no-tiene-una-politica-efectiva-para-apoyar-a-las-personas-migrantes-retornadas>

206 <https://criterio.hn/mas-de-24-mil-migrantes-en-transito-han-ingresado-a-honduras-entre-enero-y-abril-de-2022/>

207 <https://radioprogressohn.net/aplicacion-movil/solo-faltan-tres-mil-acuerdos-de-permanencia-en-salud/>

208 <https://radioprogressohn.net/portada/ihss-una-institucion-saqueada-y-con-pocas-probabilidades-de-salir-adelante-por-la-corrupcion/>

209 <https://contracorriente.red/2022/05/19/la-opacidad-que-persiste-en-el-ihss/>

Education

Two years after stopping in person classes, universities also opened up again.²¹⁰

Poverty

According to the World Bank, Honduras remains the second poorest country (after Haiti) in the western hemisphere.²¹¹ According to FOSDEH, 73% of Hondurans live in poverty.²¹² The National Statistics Institute (INE) coincided stating that 73.6% of Hondurans live in poverty.²¹³

On May 22, 120 municipalities of the Dry Corridor announced to face food insecurity.²¹⁴

Ahuas Massacre

CEPR denounced that on the tenth anniversary of the Ahuas massacre in Honduras, survivors and family members of victims still languish while there is no accountability. "“The Ahuas massacre will forever be a black mark in the already disastrous US-led ‘War on Drugs’ in the region, and should have led to an overhaul of how the US engages in counternarcotics operations abroad,” Alex Main said. “Instead, there has been little change, and the incident, and the still-languishing victims and their terrorized community, seem to have largely been forgotten.””²¹⁵ Senator Patrick Leahy published a statement on the massacre. "Instead of taking responsibility, assessing their mistakes, and examining their methods and partnerships with Honduran security forces, DEA and State Department officials obstructed U.S. and Honduran investigations of the incident and falsely reported to Members of Congress, including my staff, that the boat’s passengers had fired on security forces. They also insisted that the DEA bore no responsibility for the discharging of weapons and had only played a supportive and advisory role during the mission. After the horrifying events of May 11, 2012, the DEA continued joint operations using battlefield tactics in the area that resulted in two more fatal shootings. Following one of these incidents, the Honduran police team leader was reported to have been instructed by his superiors to plant a weapon into evidence. (...) I wish I could say that the DEA and the State Department have learned the lessons of Ahuas. But that will not be possible until those who fired on those innocent people and lied about it are brought to justice, and until the victims are properly compensated and cared for. That is the shared responsibility of the U.S. and Honduran governments."²¹⁶

Elections

After months of delay, the local elections in Duyure, Choluteca, San Lucas, El Paraíso and Wampusipri, Gracias a Dios, were repeated.²¹⁷ The National Party lost its mayoral seat in Duyure, but won again in Wampusipri.²¹⁸ In Duyure, out of the "blue", they mayor's office went up in flames

210 <https://confidencialhn.com/tras-2-anos-de-ausencia-por-la-pandemia-unah-inicia-clases-presenciales/>

211 <https://confidencialhn.com/honduras-es-el-segundo-pais-mas-pobre-del-hemisferio-occidental-segun-el-banco-mundial/>

212 <https://proceso.hn/un-73-de-poblacion-hondurena-esta-en-situacion-de-pobreza-fosdeh/>

213 <https://elpulso.hn/2022/05/24/ine-segura-que-siete-de-cada-10-hondurenos-viven-en-pobreza/>

214 <https://tiempo.hn/120-municipios-honduras-mas-escasez-alimentos/>

215 <https://cepr.net/press-release/ten-years-after-honduran-villagers-were-killed-in-a-dea-led-operation-survivors-and-families-languish-and-theres-been-no-accountability/>

216 <https://www.leahy.senate.gov/press/statement-on-the-tenth-anniversary-of-the-massacre-at-ahuas-honduras>

217 <https://confidencialhn.com/dan-inicio-a-la-repeticion-de-las-elecciones-en-nivel-municipal-en-duyure-san-lucas-y-wampusirpi/>

218 <https://www.elheraldo.hn/honduras/partido-nacional-pierde-alcaldia-duyure-gana-wampusirpi-elecciones-CY8155895>

burning all documents of the previous, Nationalist, administration.²¹⁹ "The Institute for Access to Public Information (IAIP) denounced that, in several municipalities in the country, the former authorities stole public documents related to the execution of the economic resources they managed during their administration."²²⁰

And Light at the End of a Month

The fight against corruption saw two important developments this month: the visit of a UN exploratory mission for the installation of a UN-backed mission as well as the strengthening of UFERCO.

219 <https://criterio.hn/destruccion-de-documentos-practica-del-partido-nacional-que-resalta-tras-incendio-en-alcaldia-de-duyure/>

220 <http://www.clibrehonduras.com/cl/index.php/alertas/obstruccion-informativa/1488-iaip-denuncia-el-desaparecimiento-de-archivos-en-varias-alcaldias-del-pais>

Another Month at the Honduras Forum Switzerland

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-

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-

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