

Rights Action
April 17, 2012

UN Independent Experts Call On Honduras To Adopt Measures To Stop Killing Of Lawyers

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41745&Cr=latin+america&Cr1>

11 April 2012 – Two United Nations independent experts today called on the Government of Honduras to adopt concrete measures to stop the killing of lawyers in the country, stressing that they should be able to carry out their functions without risking their lives.

According to the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), 74 lawyers have been killed in Honduras in the past three years without the Government responding adequately to the crimes. In recent months, nine lawyers have been assassinated, six of them in the capital, Tegucigalpa.

“In addition to the frequency of the killings and the death threats against lawyers, we are worried about the impunity of these crimes in Honduras,” the Special Rapporteur on the independence of magistrates and attorneys, Gabriela Knaul, and the Special Rapporteur on arbitrary executions, Christof Heyns, said in a statement.

Independent experts, or special rapporteurs, are appointed by the Geneva-based Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme. The positions are honorary and the experts are not United Nations staff, nor are they paid for their work.

The most recent murder occurred in January, when Ricardo Rosales, a lawyer in the city of La Ceiba, was killed after denouncing human rights violations in a local newspaper. “Governments have the obligation of guaranteeing that attorneys can carry out all their professional duties without intimidation and without risking their safety and that of their relatives,” said Ms. Knaul. “They should guarantee adequate protection to lawyers when their safety is threatened because of their job.”

**WHAT TO DO – WRITE & KEEP ON WRITING
NO MORE POLITICS AND BUSINESS AS USUAL**

We ask that North Americans keep on sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to Canadian and American politicians and government officials ... and to your local media. Since the June 2009 military coup, that ousted the democratically elected government of President Zelaya in Honduras, the governments of the USA and Canada are the governments that have most supported and legitimized the post-coup, repressive regimes of Honduras. North American companies and investors have increased their business activities in Honduras since the coup. In no small part, this illegitimate, repressive regime remains in power due to its political, economic and military relations with the USA and Canada.

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