

Amnesty International

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2012

HONDURAS: JUSTICE DEMANDED AT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEDIA AWARDS FOR JOURNALIST UNDER THREAT

Over a hundred guests at the Amnesty International Media Awards ceremony in London last night demanded justice for Honduran journalist Dina Meza.

Top journalists and other high profile guests including BBC foreign correspondent Sue Lloyd-Roberts and Sunday Times photographer Paul Conroy, who was injured in the February attack in Homs, Syria that killed reporter Marie Colvin, were among those who called on the authorities in Honduras to provide appropriate protection for Dina Meza. She is currently facing a series of violent threats, including threats of sexual violence.

Attendees at the 21st Amnesty International UK Media Awards expressed their support for Dina Meza - the 2007 recipient of Amnesty International's Special Award for Human Rights Journalism under Threat – as they signed a giant card addressed to the Ambassador of Honduras to the UK which called on the authorities in Honduras to investigate the threats against Dina, bring perpetrators to justice and ensure that appropriate protective measures are implemented.

Speaking at last night's Media Awards ceremony, Amnesty International UK Director Kate Allen was one of the first signatories of the card. She said:

"It's nothing short of a tragedy that here we can celebrate the bravery and courage of investigative journalists in the UK who expose human rights abuses through ceremonies such as this, while in other countries like Honduras, journalists are at risk of being killed and attacked for carrying out this kind of work.

"The Honduran authorities must make every effort to put an end to these threats and attacks upon these brave men and women who dare to stand up for human rights and freedom of expression."

Dina Meza is one of a number of journalists and human rights defenders who have suffered threats and harassment since the beginning of 2012. Amnesty International has reported how journalists have received death threats by telephone calls and text message in recent months.

Despite repeated assurances that the Honduran government is taking action to protect journalists, figures provided by the National Commissioner for Human Rights show that since President Lobo took office in January 2010, 23 journalists have been murdered. Amnesty International issued a public letter on 18 May urging the government to tackle the alarming number of attacks on human rights defenders and journalists.

Background

Dina Meza reports on human rights issues for the website Defenders Online (Defensores en Linea). She is also a human rights activist with the Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras - COFADEH), a prominent human rights organisation in Honduras.

In 2007, Dina Meza received Amnesty International UK's 'Special Award for Human Rights Journalism Under Threat' for her journalism for the website Revistazo, which she carried out in spite of harassment and intimidation after investigating several private security firms for labour rights violations. The most recent set of threats against her began in early February this year.

Dina Meza is a beneficiary of Precaution Measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in 2006 and 2009 to safeguard her security. To date, the authorities have not properly implemented the orders.

Human rights defenders and journalists in Honduras are at risk: they are threatened, attacked or killed because of their work, often exposing human rights violations and holding individuals to account.