

Highlights on the Honduran Crisis as reported by Honduran Feminists in Resistance

On June 28, the democratically elected President of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, was forcibly removed from power and exiled to Costa Rica by the Honduran military in a coup d'état. On September 21, Zelaya returned to Honduras with the support of the government of Brazil and has taken refuge in the Brazilian Embassy where thousands of people from around the country have amassed to show their support for a return to democracy. In response, the de facto government deployed the police and Armed Forces to control the demonstrations resulting in violent attacks against the thousands of peaceful protesters. Below are some of the highlights received from the women of the Honduran Feminists in Resistance who have been on the frontlines of pro-democracy actions and resistance since the coup occurred three months ago.

- A nationwide curfew was imposed, beginning September 21, 2009, to suppress the peaceful citizen gatherings around the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa in support of President Zelaya's return. The curfew lasted until 7 a.m. the following day and has been erratically imposed since then.
- Beginning at 7 p.m. on September 21, electrical power was cut off throughout the entire country for 48 hours. The power has been cut off intermittently since then.
- The country's national airports have been closed for days to prevent the arrival of international diplomats and reporters.
- People who were making their way towards the Brazilian Embassy from different parts of the city and from throughout the country were detained on the road and prevented from moving freely. The military set up roadblocks to prevent convoys from entering the city.
- At 5 a.m. on September 22, police and military contingents, using tear gas, dyed water, shrill alarms, beatings and live ammunition forcibly removed those who remained in front of the Brazilian Embassy.
- There are preliminary reports of at least three people killed by gunshots to the head and reports of many others being assaulted.
- An eight-year-old boy reportedly died due to tear gas asphyxiation.
- Members of the international media who were at or near the Brazilian Embassy have been beaten and forcibly removed by the police.
- Many of those who were demonstrating at the embassy have taken refuge in neighboring houses to escape police violence. These people, including children, are under a state of siege and do not have access to food or water. In San Pedro Sula, there have been reports of the military entering private homes to detain people who were participating in demonstrations.
- On the morning of September 22nd, the Armed Forces took over the dispatch center of the electricity system and cut off the circuits that supply electricity to independent media including Radio Progreso, Choluta Sur, Tele-Ceiba, Channel 36 and Radio Globo (who have since been broadcasting illegally). The Armed Forces have also prevented the entry of foreign press.
- On the morning of September 22, approximately 15 police officers fired tear gas at, and tried to enter, the headquarters of the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras

(COFADEH), where around 100 people, including women and children, were taking refuge.

- On September 22, two soldiers guarded the doors of the offices of the Center for Women's Studies in Honduras (CEMH), where 65 demonstrators, mostly women and two children, were taking refuge. The office telephones were tapped and they were without access to food or water until they escaped several hours later.
- Those who were detained or injured are being held in illegal detention centers, such as those set up at Chochi Sosa stadium and at San Francisco military base. In San Pedro Sula, detainees are being taken to the Olympic Stadium. Reports as to the number of detainees vary between 150 and 1,000.
- Repression is also being seen in the "colonias populares", or poor neighborhoods of Tegucigalpa, where gatherings of people – including teenagers defying the curfew by burning tires and throwing stones at the police – were greeted with tear gas launched by the police.
- The military is reportedly detaining people in hospitals, allegedly raiding them every couple of hours to detain people who have participated in demonstrations.
- According to one account from Jessica Sanchez of the Honduran Feminists in Resistance, on September 23, following their participation in peaceful demonstrations, Nelson Leonel Sanchez (29 years), Aldo Horacio Perdomo (20 years) and Francisco Amaya (21 years) were badly beaten by police and had to be taken to the hospital. As a result of multiple blows, Sanchez has two broken hands, Perdomo has bruised lungs and Amaya was badly bruised.
- There are reports that OAS President Jose Miguel Insulza and several foreign ministers will be traveling to Honduras on Friday afternoon or Saturday, September 25 or 26.
- The United Nations has announced it's withdrawal of financial and technical support to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Honduras.

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