

The Honorable Susan E. Rice
Ambassador to the UN
United States Mission to the United Nations
140 East 45th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017
USA

25 September 2009

Open Letter to Security Council Members on Addressing the Crisis in Honduras

Dear Ambassador Rice,

As feminist and women's organizations and networks working to address the crisis caused by the recent coup d'état in Honduras, we look to the United Nations Security Council urgently to act to address this crisis. We call on the Security Council to condemn the repressive actions and human rights violations committed by the coup government against the Honduran people, to protect the civilian population of Honduras and to support an immediate return to constitutional order, in accordance with existing international treaties and agreements to which the state of Honduras is a signatory. Events in Honduras and the response of the international community have serious implications for stability in the region and the prospects of democracy in Latin America.

We look forward to your government, as a member of the Council, supporting a strong and compelling statement from the international community. We also look forward to your support for urgent and immediate measures to address the security situation in Honduras and to protect and safeguard the rights of the Honduran people, including women who are being particularly affected by this crisis. This support would be an affirmation of the Security Council's commitments expressed in resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security.

Since the return of democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya to Honduras on September 21, the country has seen a dramatic rise in violence by the military and police forces causing further insecurity for the people of Honduras and a suspension of their civil liberties, following the orders of the de facto regime:

- An unjustified curfew was decreed, beginning September 21, 2009, to suppress the peaceful gatherings in support of President Zelaya's return – including the violent suppression of a large gathering outside of the Brazilian embassy in Tegucigalpa. Electrical power was cut off for 48 hours and there are widespread reports of human rights violations committed in response to these gatherings.
- At 5 a.m. on September 22, police and military contingents, using tear gas, dyed water, shrill alarms, beatings and bullets, forcibly removed those who remained in front of the Brazilian embassy. There are preliminary reports of three people being killed by gunshots to the head and reports of many others being assaulted; including an eight-year-old boy who died due to tear gas asphyxiation.

Those remaining near the embassy, including many children, are under siege conditions and are not being allowed access to food or water.

Furthermore, press freedoms are being severely restricted and members of the international media who were at or near the Brazilian Embassy have been beaten and

forcibly removed by the police.

- People who were making their way towards the Brazilian embassy from different parts of the city and from throughout the country have been detained on the road and prevented from moving freely. The military has set up roadblocks to prevent convoys from entering the city.
- 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. The military has even detained people who were in hospitals. This situation is reminiscent of the coup d'état in Chile in 1973, when thousands of innocent people were captured and detained at the stadium in Santiago.

In all of this, Honduran women have found themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation – both as participants in the resistance and as families of detainees. The preliminary results of the Feminist Fact-Finding Mission that was carried out in August by a delegation of human rights defenders from the United States, Canada, Mexico and Central America documented numerous cases of abuse and sexual harassment committed by the police force. These facts and other reports from numerous other international fact-finding missions to Honduras in the wake of this coup confirm that bold action is needed.

We look forward to receiving your support in urgently addressing this crisis.

Sincerely,

The undersigned organizations

- Central American Women's Fund
- Center for Women's Global Leadership, Radhika Balakrishnan, Rutgers University, USA
- Red Latinoamericana de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos
- Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), International
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, USA
- CLADEM (Comite Latino Americano para Losa Derechos de La Mujer), Uruguay
- Global Fund For Women, USA
- Equipo Feminista de GCAP
- International Human Rights Internship Program, USA
- FOCO- Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos. Argentina
- CODEPINK, USA
- Peace X Peace, USA
- Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, The Netherlands
- Feministas en Marcha, Puerto Rico
- JASS (Just Associates), USA & International
- Documentación y Estudios (CDE). Paraguay
- Red de Feministas, Paraguay
- CEMUJER, El Salvador
- Colectiva Feminista para el Desarrollo Local

- Alianza Feminista Centroamericana Transformando la Cultura Patriarcal, El Salvador
- Colectiva Feminista, El Salvador
- Articulación Territorial Nacional de Mujeres Salvadoreñas, El Salvador
- Concertación de Mujeres de Suchitoto, El Salvador
- Concertación de Mujeres de Oriente. El Salvador.
- Unión Salvadoreña de Organizaciones Locales de Mujeres. El Salvador
- Asociación para la Autodeterminación y Desarrollo de Mujeres Salvadoreñas. El Salvador
- Palabra de Mujer, Canal 15, Universidad de Costa Rica. Costa Rica.
- Colectiva por el Derecho a Decidir, Costa Rica
- Agenda Política de Mujeres, Costa Rica
- Voces de Mujeres, Guatemala
- Actoras de Cambio, Guatemala
- Actualmente Asesora de Comunicación de la presidencia del Congreso Nacional, Paraguay
- Red Feminista, Paraguay
- Asociación de Profesionales de Servicio Social o Trabajo Social del Paraguay, Paraguay
- Grupo de Acción Comunitaria- GAC, Paraguay
- Catarsis Colectiva Feminista, Paraguay
- Cotidiano Mujer, Uruguay
- Articulación Feminista Marcosur
- CEASPA (Centro de Estudios y Acción Social Panameña), Panama
- MADRE, USA
- Observatorio Género y Equidad, Chile
- Grupo EA (colectivo feminista Uruguay), Uruguay
- Senadora Margarita Percovich, Uruguay
- La Ciudad de las Diosas, Argentina
- Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, México
- Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir, México
- Red Nacional Género y Economía (REDGE), México
- Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres, México-Zona Centro
- Mujeres para el Diálogo, A.C. México
- Siembra, A.C. México
- Territorios de Cultura para la Equidad, México
- Consorcio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad. México
- Agencia de Noticias a favor de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, Guatemala
- Centro De Derechos Constitucionales, Nicaragua
- Agregar al Colectivo Feminista Mujeres Universitarias, Honduras.
- Feministas en resistencia Honduras, Honduras
- Red de Mujeres Comitzahual, Honduras
- Equipo de Reflexión e Investigación, Honduras
- Casa Luna. Tocoa, Honduras
- Red de Mujeres del Aguán, Honduras
- Red de Mujeres Patepluma, Honduras
- Campaña por la Convencion Interamericana de Derechos Sexuales y Derechos Reproductivos, Perú
- Colbri Consulting, USA
- The Praxis Project, USA
- People's Advocacy, Egypt/USA

- Learning by Design, the Netherlands
- WATER, USA
- Mutawinat, Sudan
- Department of Gender & Women's Studies, Nayereh Tohidi, Ph.D., California State University, Northridge, USA
- Department of Gender & Women's Studies, Breny Mendoza, Ph.D., Associate Professor, California State University, Northridge, USA
- International Leadership Team, The GRAIL, South Africa
- KAN, Indonesia
- APIK, Indonesia
- PESADA, Indonesia
- Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, USA
- Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe (RSMLAC)
- Worker Hub For Change (WH4C), USA
- GENERA (Red de Mujeres Feministas por la Equidad de Género en el Desarrollo). Spain
- Institute of Peace and Democracy, Indonesia
- Osorto, USA
- Southwest Workers Union, USA
- Unidas en Acción Kontra La Violencia Estructural, Spain
- "Somos de las R.A.R.A.S.S" (REDES ANTI-PATRIARCALES DE REFLEXIÓN Y ACCIONES SOLIDARIAS/SUBVERSIVAS), Spain
- CEPROSI, Asociación de los Centros de Mujeres de los Macrodisitritos Max Paredes, Cotahuma y El Alto de La Paz , Bolivia
- Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan
- Women Living Under Muslim Laws. United Kingdom
- Liga Internacional de Mujeres pro Paz y Libertad (LIMPAL), Costa Rica
- Karapatan (Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights, Philippines)
- School of the Americas Watch, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, USA
- MIZANGAS: MUJERES JÓVENES AFRODESCENDIENTES
- Movimiento Autónomo de Mujeres de Nicaragua (MAM)
- Jovenes Feministas Universitarias, Honduras
- Colectivo Feminista Mujeres Universitarias, Honduras
- Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition, Philippines
- Coalition of African Lesbians, South Africa
- Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria, Brasil
- Asociación Feminista La Cuerda, Guatemala
- FLACSO, Guatemala
- Colectivo de Lesbianas feministas Josefa camejo, Venezuela-Argentina.
- Colectivo Kaos en la Red
- WiLDAF (Women in Law and Development in Africa), Zimbabwe