

HONDURAS

VIOLENT REPRESSION FOLLOWING ELECTIONS

At least 13 people have reportedly been killed, scores of people detained and others injured as a result of violent repression of protests provoked by the presidential election in Honduras on 26 November.

A sudden change to the results of the presidential election in Honduras has submerged the country into a state of violence and tension since the polls closed on 26 November. On 29 November, following several days without any official information on the election results being published, the electoral commission, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral, TSE), declared the current president, Juan Orlando Hernández, the winner. This announcement was a radical change compared to the first trend indicated by this same commission on 27 November, in which it announced a five-point lead to the opposition candidate, Salvador Nasralla.

This announcement gave rise to multiple massive protests and barricading of various roads around the country as a reaction to the lack of transparency in the processing and counting of votes. These protests were violently repressed by the Honduran security forces. On 1 December, the authorities declared a state of emergency for a period of 10 days. The Decree establishes a curfew restricting the right to free movement at night and could involve the participation of the armed forces to support the national police force in maintaining security and order.



Protesters clash with police during election violence.

Photo credit: www.commondreams.org

According to information local organizations provided to Amnesty International, since 29 November cases of excessive use of force against protestors by the authorities have multiplied, such as the use of water cannons, tear gas and lethal weapons. To date at least 13 people have been reported killed, including a child, in the context of the protests and during the evening and curfew time. Dozens have been arrested and detained, including children, and others injured during operations to repress protests. Serious concerns exist in relation to the respect of the rights to life, physical integrity, due process, freedom of expression and assembly and peaceful protest.

Please send a fax, email or letter without delay. (Postage is \$2.50.)

* Call on the authorities to refrain from disproportionate use of force and to fully respect the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

* Ask that all those detained only for exercising their right to peaceful protest are released immediately. Anyone charged with a crime must be guaranteed their right to due process, the right to defence, medical attention, and access to family and lawyers of their choosing. In cases involving children who have been detained, the best interests of the child must be guaranteed at all times.

* Insist that a comprehensive, impartial and independent investigation by civilian authorities is immediately opened into all the cases of violent deaths which occurred in the context of repression of the protests. The results must be made public and those suspected of criminal responsibility must be brought to justice before ordinary civilian courts.

Here is the contact information you need:

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Please send a copy to

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Additional information

In 2015, in a controversial ruling, the Supreme Court of Justice declared article 239 of the Constitution, which prohibits presidential re-election, inapplicable, paving the way for the re-election of officials such as the then president, Juan Orlando Hernández.

On 26 November 2017 presidential elections were held in Honduras. In the early morning of 27 November, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral, TSE) published an initial indication of results, based on the revision of 57 percent of the votes, which indicated that the opposition candidate Salvador Nasralla had a five-point lead against the current president of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernández. Both candidates declared themselves winners.

According to the preliminary report from the Electoral Observation Mission of the Organization of American States in Honduras, published following the elections, “the system of publication of the results, available to the public online, was not updated [following the first announcement from the TSE] on 27 November. Upon review, the Mission observed how the difference between the candidates narrowed down”. In the afternoon of 29 November, the TSE announced a different result, pointing to the victory of Juan Orlando Hernández.

Honduras is one of the most violent countries in the world, with high rates of murder and insecurity. There is a high level of mistrust of institutions, fueled by the fact that impunity prevails in the majority of crimes, and by repeated signs of corruption or the involvement of state forces in criminal activities.

Human rights defenders are particularly exposed to violence. Honduras is one of the most dangerous countries in Latin America for human rights defenders, especially for defenders of the land and environment.

In February 2017, Amnesty International expressed its concern over the reforms to the Criminal Code in relation to the crime of terrorism due to the fact that the new regulations, phrased in extremely broad terms, could lead to arbitrary and inappropriate implementation in the context of peaceful protests, or lead to the criminalization of human rights defenders.

As a result of the coup of 28 June 2009, during which various states of exception and curfews were approved, serious human rights violations on the part of Honduran security forces were reported.