

<p>via fax: 011 504 2290 5129  <b>Sra. Ministra Ana Piñeda</b>  Minister for Justice and Human Rights of Honduras</p>	<p>via fax: 011 504 2221 5667  <b>Sr. Luis Alberto Rubi</b>  Attorney General of Honduras</p>
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January 25, 2011

Dear Madam and Sir:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are concerned for the safety of human rights defender, **Alex David Sánchez Álvarez**. Besides actively working and volunteering for a number of LGBT and human rights organizations, Alex Sánchez has also participated in protests against the coup d'etat of June 28, 2009. We believe that he has been targeted and that his life is at risk.

On January 14, Alex David Sánchez Álvarez, was standing with other LGBT activists outside the office of the Colectivo Violeta, an LGBT organization, when a man got out of a car, walked towards Alex, and pointed at pistol at him and his friend saying, "You are the ones we are missing." They reported the incident to the local police, noting the license plate number and color of the vehicle.

On January 19, as Alex David Sánchez Álvarez crossed the road two and a half blocks from the office of the Centre for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and their Families (CPTRT) where he works as a nurse, a motorbike with two men pulled up. One of them struck Alex across the face with a pistol, leaving a mark below his right eye, and then sped off. Alex reported the incident to the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights the same day. No protection has been offered to him.

According to local organizations, three persons belonging to the LGBT community have been killed since January 7 this year. In December 2009 LGBT activist Walter Tróchez was murdered following repeated threats and surviving a previous attempt on his life (cf our letter of January 14, 2010). In 2010, the murders of at least eleven LGBT persons were documented by Honduran non-governmental organizations. In April 2010, Amnesty International expressed its concern for threats to LGBT people in Honduras in its Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review. On January 20, 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) stated it is "deeply concerned about serious threats, acts of violence and murders against members of the transgender community in Honduras, in particular the rising number of killings of members of the LGBT community."

Because of our concern for the safety of Alex David Sánchez Álvarez, we **urgently call** upon your humanity and integrity to take the following actions:

- conduct an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats made against Alex David Sánchez Álvarez, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate steps to fully provide appropriate protection to him in accordance with his wishes;
- permit human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Jorge Ramon Hernández Alcerro, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751  
Hugo Llorens, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via US mail  
Jeremy Spector, Attaché for Human Rights and Labor, US Embassy to Honduras ~ via email  
Benjamin Gadan, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax 202-647-2597  
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458-3992  
Centro de Prevencion, Tratamiento y Rehabilitacion de las Victimas de Torturas y sus Familiares (CPTRT) ~ via fax 011 504 2236 7273  
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

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**The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter:**