

via fax: 011 504 2221 5667 <b>Sr. Luis Alberto Rubí</b> Attorney General of Honduras	via fax: 011 504 22201756 <b>Sr. Pompeyo Bonilla</b> Minister of Interior of Honduras
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December 11, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of **Juana Dolores Valenzuela**, an environmental journalist for the digital human rights news site *Revistazo.com* and the environmental news site *Periodicoecovida.com*.

On the morning of November 27 she and the president of the Honduran Congress's Mining Commission were on a TV program on state broadcaster Canal 8 speaking about opencast metal-ore mining. She then travelled to the Radio Católica studios, where she participated in a program on environmental issues, including opencast metal-ore mining, illegal logging, and hydroelectric dams. She mentioned the names of several people who she said were responsible for environmental destruction.

When she returned home at 4pm, she found an email, sent at 2:30pm, which read: "because of your big mouth we're going to kill you one of these days, when are you going to learn some respect...old woman who never learned...you reached old age. . .with that big mouth your coffin won't be big enough for your tongue." She has reported the death threat to the authorities.

After visiting Honduras in February 2012, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders said that human rights defenders there were still suffering death threats, attacks, harassment and stigmatization, and urged the authorities to establish an urgently-needed protection program for defenders. In an open letter to the Honduran government in May 2012, Amnesty International expressed deep concern at the sharp increase in attacks and threats against journalists and human rights defenders and urged the authorities to take steps to address the situation. To date, there has been no reply to the letter.

Because of the frequency and the ferocity with which environmental and other activists are threatened, attacked and murdered for their work, we take very seriously the threat against Juana Dolores Valenzuela described above and **strongly urge you to:**

- order an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threat to kill Juana Dolores Valenzuela, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate steps to provide appropriate protection to Juana Dolores Valenzuela, in accordance with her wishes;
- remember that human rights defenders have a right 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: CEHPRODEC ~ via U.S. mail  
Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751  
Lisa Kubiske, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax  
Nathan Anderson, Attache for Human Rights and Labor, US Embassy to Honduras ~ via email  
Benjamin Gedan, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax 202.647.2597  
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email  
Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458.3992  
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:**