

IACHR publishes observations on follow-up visit to Honduras

On the 7th June 2010, the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) published its Preliminary Observations from its visit to Honduras in May this year, which followed up its visit of August 2009.

The Commission verified that there are continuing human rights violations in Honduras and that particularly at risk are human rights defenders, journalists, teachers, members of the resistance and trade union members, many of whom are regularly threatened, harassed and attacked. For instance, thus far in 2010 alone, at least 7 journalists and 10 human rights defenders have been murdered in circumstances that may be related to the coup. Impunity for these and other violations continues due to the lack of effective investigation by state bodies and the judicial system, and decisions taken by the Supreme Court of Justice that weaken the rule of law, such as its decision to dismiss those judges and magistrates who sought to prevent the coup.

The IACHR has granted a number of precautionary measures to protect persons at risk, but serious problems with their implementation have forced it to urge Honduras to comply more effectively with these measures; indeed CAWN notes with concern that at least one person has been murdered whilst under this 'protection'. The Commission also notes that although an advisory Minister on Human Rights has been appointed, it is practically impossible for her to have a significant impact on the observance of human rights within the current structure, mandate and the resources available to her.

With respect to the situation of women, CAWN is extremely concerned that the Office of the Public Prosecutor in Honduras was unable to give the IACHR any information on the advancement of investigations into the numerous reports of assault and sexual attacks against women by the security forces at the height of the coup. Furthermore, the Commission has reported that women continue to be subjected to degrading treatment and physical and sexual assault at the hands of the security forces. CAWN supports the recommendation of the IACHR that Honduras acts to ensure that female victims of violence have full access to adequate judicial protection, and adopts the necessary legal and judicial mechanisms to investigate complaints of violence against women, punish those responsible and compensate the victims.

For the Preliminary Observations in full (English), please [click here](#).

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