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SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

EDITORIAL



International Media Training in Vienna, 22 - 26 June 2013

A sunny Vienna welcomed the 28 women participating in this year's International Media Training, which included women advocates from Costa Rica, Tanzania, Dominican Republic, Latvia, Spain, Chile, Honduras, Austria, South Africa, Greece and many more countries. In a joint event held in June by Frauensolidarität and CAWN, participants looked at [how can the media be used](#) to strengthen women's rights and contributed to the drafting of the [Vienna + 20 Declaration](#) at the conference, which marked the 20th anniversary of the UN World Conference on Human Rights.



Back in London CAWN has supported Al-Jazeera in the production of a documentary that analyses the impact on women of El Salvador's draconian abortion law, including the case of Beatriz which has drawn international attention to this issue after she was recently denied a life-saving abortion. CAWN alerted UN Rapporteurs, Salvadoran policy-makers, European media and the general public to Beatriz's situation and to the political forces, including the catholic and evangelist churches, behind an attack on women's human rights that affects hundreds of women in El Salvador and across Central America. This attack on women's rights is what we will be denouncing on October 2 at the screening of Al-Jazeera's documentary in London, followed by an expert discussion panel. Email us at campaigns@cawn.org to book your place!



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

CONTENTS INDEX

Our announcements /// page 2

Calls for solidarity and action /// page 6

News and analysis /// page 7

Women's struggles /// page 15

CAWN's Partner organisations /// page 19

OUR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Updates, shout-outs, past and upcoming activities and more

Recent events and publications

International Media-training "The use of radio as a tool for social change"

Our training on the use of media in Vienna from 22 to 24 June was an amazing experience with women advocates joining from Central America, Southern Africa and Europe.

How can the media be used to improve the situation of women and strengthen women's rights? What is the role of alternative media and social media? These were some of the questions we asked ourselves. In [this podcast](#) you can hear some activists talking about their work and the role of the media.

New article in Women's Rights and the Media blog: Poverty fuelling human trafficking in Central America

Klaudia Meszaros, a participant from our last advocacy training, argues that poverty fuels human trafficking in Central America. [Read her article.](#)

'Women's rights and the media' is an open space to share views on the exploitation of women, the use of media to advance women's rights or any other women's rights issues. You are all invited to send us your contributions for the blog!



Summer issue of Central America Report

The Summer issue of the Central America Report is out now!

In this issue:

- Controversy over the genocide conviction of former Guatemalan dictator
- The legacy of Hugo Chavez in Nicaragua
- Fears of violence ahead of the Honduran elections
- El Salvador rolls out plans to combat climate disasters
- Food security, co-ops and local fair trade in Nicaragua
- Solidarity through campaigning, accompaniment, circus, Fairtrade, fiestas and food

[And more](#)



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

Upcoming events and publications

Report: Exploitation and Trafficking of Women - Critiquing narratives during the London Olympics

CAWN's new report looks at the role of civil society and the media in shaping public understanding of different forms of exploitation experienced by women, in particular migrant women, in the context of major sporting events. It is based on an extensive study of press coverage of the issues of trafficking and exploitation of women during the London Olympics 2012 and examines critically the range of narratives underlying the approach to these issues in the print media.

In addition, the report includes in-depth analysis of the campaigns mounted by five civil society organizations (CSOs) and compares the different approaches and strategies applied in each case, assessing the reasons for the varying degrees of success of each. An important aim of the study was to identify lessons and draw up recommendations based on the experience of the London Olympics that can be applied to other forthcoming major sporting events.

The report will be released in August. You'll be able to find it in [our site](#), where you can also find our previous publications.

October 2, 2013: Screening of documentary on Abortion in El Salvador

On the occasion of the International Day of the Decriminalisation of Abortion, September 28, CAWN is organising a screening of a documentary we have worked on alongside Al Jazeera, about the impact that the Salvadoran ban on abortion has on women. After the 25 minutes documentary there will be a discussion panel with members from CAWN, Amnesty International UK and Abortion Support Network, a charity that helps people who travel to England to access a safe and legal abortion.

The screening and debate will take place in London on October 2. The exact venue will be confirmed nearer the date of the event. This event is for free. Email us at campaigns@cawn.org to book your place.

For more information on the topic of reproductive rights, you can read our [briefing paper on Maternal Health, Reproductive Rights and the Criminalisation of Abortion](#), published last autumn.

Women's poetry from Central America

Nora Vanegas is a Salvadorian feminist poet. She works as lecturer on Philosophy at the State University in El Salvador. She has served Ad-honorem, co-ordinating feminist education in the Secretary of Women Studies of El Salvador.

DESNUDOS DE MUJER APRENDIZAJES

Esplendida forma de amar
Voy aprendiendo
Con los años que me hacen
Mujer emocionalmente madura
Cicatrizo las heridas el dolor
Las Huellas de la identidad del ayer

En el ahora Iniciamos empatías
Vivencias con mujeres que despojan
lo prohibido por siempre concebido
en la cultura y prácticas rutinarias

NAKED WOMEN LEARNINGS

Splendid way to love
I am learning
With the years that make me
An emotionally mature woman
I heal the wounds, the pain
The footprints of the identity of yesterday

In the now we start empathies
Experiences with women that strip
the forbidden forever conceived
in the culture and routine practices



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

Juntas de la mano compañeras divinas
Construimos el credo de la vida
El camino decreto del mañana
Anunciamos ante las cuatro estaciones
Nuestros nuevos pensamientos
Que hacen reconocernos
en los diversos matices y dinámicas
como mujeres auténticas
las del próximo día y futuras lejanas

With hands joints we, divine companions
build the creed of life
The decree path of tomorrow
We announce to the four seasons
Our new thoughts
That recognize ourselves
in the various nuances and dynamics
as authentic women
the ones of the next day and distant future

Juventud exquisita siento hoy
profundos suspiros sonrisas vibrantes
representan el innovador marco de mi cara
Constato a cada instante
El correr de miel entre mis venas
Mi piel delicadamente perfumada
El Aroma de mujer mi fragancia natural
En el recorrido coloquial
Desentraño lo vedado reprimido no contado
Exploro la multiplicidad de sensaciones
Calladas escondidas silenciadas

Exquisite youth I feel today
deep sighs, vibrant smiles
they represent the innovative frame of my face
I note at every instant
The running of honey through my veins
My skin delicately scented
The Scent of woman, my natural fragrance
In the colloquial route
I unravel the forbidden, repressed, untold
Explore the multiplicity of sensations
Quieted, hidden, silenced

Me siento invernadero
Orgullosa inquieta vehementemente
rebelde y transgresora del sistema
Más enamorada eterna
declaro sobre la cima de los cuatro vientos
En cada estación de la marea y universo
No soy mujer marchita
Ni pétalo deshojado por el tiempo
Que se pierde en el ocaso

I feel like a greenhouse
Proud, vehemently restless
rebellious and transgressive of the system
Plus eternally in love
I declare on top of the four winds
In each tide and season of the universe
I'm not a withered woman
Neither petal defoliated by time
That gets lost in the twilight

Soy fuente de corrientes cristalinas
Que trasmuta de mujer a mariposa
De mariposa a mujer liberada
Que palpita en la transparencia
De la belleza del espíritu
Con la soltura de mi cuerpo y alma
En cada ruta imaginaria
Y cuando danzo el ritual acordado
con el varón encantado
intensa pecaminosamente deseado

I am source of crystal-like currents
That transmutes from woman to butterfly
From butterfly to liberated woman
That beats in the transparency
Of the beauty of the spirit
With the ease of my body and soul
In each imaginary route
And when I dance the agreed ritual
with the delighted male
intensely sinfully desired

COMPLICIDAD

Amiga confidente, desnudo mi secreto
Mi corazón esta tarde se volvió bohemio
Inquieto enamorado apasionado por la dualidad
Del tiempo del aire de mi ser
Diáfano como el día
oscuro como la noche azul también
Dos universos albergo en mi aposento
instintivamente naturales
mas asimilo que el tiempo de amar
Es el presente cotidiano

COMPLICITY

Confidant Friend, I undress my secret
My heart this evening became bohemian
Restless, in love, passionate about duality
Of the time, the air, of my being
Clear as day
dark as blue night too
Two universes I harbor in my room
Instinctively natural
Though I assimilate than the time to love
Is the everyday present



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

El ayer no existe más pretendo olvidar
mi corazón padece una lucha existencial
Se resiste a sufrir más
A ser maltratado olvidado
controlado por terceros
Ahogados en el calendario
Confusos por necedades
Aprendió a la vez
Que la dualidad del ser
permite sentir con extraordinaria
Satisfacción todos los momentos
La sujeción entre el cuerpo y el alma
Los tonos grises como rutas alternas
Sus conexiones separaciones
Dispuestos a transformarse abrirse
En la espiral golpeada por el torbellino
del conflicto interno desvanecido

Aprendió también amar y dejarse amar
De la manera más diáfana
Súbita libre espontánea
Menos frustrante exigente
Ahora me dice que siente el éxtasis
El gozo sin límites y barreras
Que le ofrece la sola presencia
El roce y encuentro de miradas
La palabra cálida segura
Los susurros al oído
La delicia del sabor exquisito
de unos labios húmedos compartidos
El mimo suave sereno de una tierna voz
La mirada cándida lejana cercana
La piel sonrojada vibrante
El brote del llanto tenue delicado
El encuentro y nudo de unas manos
El silencio y soledad requerida
Los suspiros de miel liberados
la despedida primorosa sin apego

Mi corazón aprendió
El disfrute de una irónica sonrisa
Constató que simultáneamente
Se puede amar apasionadamente
de distintas maneras, que cada amor es diferente
Ligar diferenciar sentimientos típicos y atípicos
Aprendió a compartimentar emociones
Amiga cómplice guárdame el secreto
Se me escapó el corazón no lo puedo controlar
se volvió rebelde contestatario
Hoy me enseña con valentía
A manejar lo infinito en libertad a
romper fronteras imaginarias
que ahogaban mi ser cristalino
En la simple soledad

The past does not exist, then I pretend to forget
my heart suffers an existential struggle
It refuses to suffer more
To be mistreated, forgotten
third controlled
Drowning in the calendar
Confused by nonsense
It learned at a time
That duality of being
allows to feel with extraordinary
Satisfaction all moments
The attachment between the body and soul
The gray tones as alternate routes
Their connections, separations
Willing to change, to open
In the spiral hit by the whirlwind
of the vanished internal conflict

It also learned to love and be loved
In the most diaphanous way
Sudden, free, spontaneous
Less frustrating, demanding
Now it tells me it feels the ecstasy
The joy without bounds and barriers
That is offered by the very presence
The touch and meeting glances
The warm, safe word
The whispers in my ear
The delight of the exquisite taste
of shared humid lips
The soft, serene coddle of a tender voice
The candid look, distant, close
The vibrant flushed skin
The outbreak of delicate dim cry
The meeting and knot of hands
The silence and solitude required
The honey sighs released
the exquisite farewell without attachment

My heart learned
The joy of a wry smile
It noted that simultaneously
You can love passionately
in different ways, that each love is different
To tie, to differentiate typical and atypical feelings
It learned to compartmentalize emotions
Accomplice friend save my secret
My heart has escaped, I cannot control it
it turned rebel, confrontational
Today it bravely teaches me
To handle the infinite in freedom
of breaking imaginary frontiers
that choked my crystalline being
In the simple solitude



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

CALLS FOR SOLIDARITY AND ACTION

Calls for international feminist solidarity from Honduran and Mexican feminists translated by CAWN

Help needed for sugar cane workers in Honduras!

700 Honduran sugar cane workers organized as the Campesino Movement of San Manuel (MOC-SAM) are currently occupying land that they have been attempting to recuperate for three and a half years. They have been under heavy repression from the sugar company CAHSA (suppliers of sugar to Coca Cola in Honduras) who has hired security guards that act more like paramilitary guards, threatening, wounding and even killing some members of MOCSAM (*see Statement by the CPTRT in our Women's Struggles section*).

The farmers (campesinos) are legally entitled to the land. The National Agrarian Institute of Honduras has expropriated the land from the sugar company citing Agrarian laws. The company has greatly exceeded the amount that any one person or company can possess. The company has used its influence and wealth to get the Supreme Court of Honduras to interfere in the expropriation process. Please help the campesinos in their efforts to legally obtain their land. Their greatest need at this moment is food supplies to help feed the 700 people who are living in the sugar cane fields in make shift huts. This is a small request to help them as they reorganize their recuperation plan. The donation will not only help to feed the men, women and children of MOCSAM, but the international solidarity will help to boost their morale as they see that they are not struggling alone.

[Donate](#)



International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion: Mexico - Justice for Hilda

In 2009, when Hilda, a woman of scarce resources, was 18 years old, she was accused of an illegal abortion by health personnel after seeking care at a government hospital. The accusation was based on the confession she was forced to make in exchange for life-saving medical treatment, without the presence of a lawyer.

On April 5th of this year, she was found guilty of illegal abortion despite the lack of evidence against her. The accusation is invalid and violates Hilda's right to not self-incriminate and to be free from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Hilda's case demonstrates judicial authorities' prejudice related to abortion and medical personnel's criminalization of women who seek care in government hospitals in Mexico. It is a pattern that GIRE has documented within health services that places women's health and lives at risk.

Please show your support for Hilda by [signing this letter](#) to San Luis Potosi's Supreme Court Justices Zeferino Esquerro Corpus, Carlos Alejandro Robledo and María Guadalupe Orozco Santiago, asking them to resolve Hilda's appeal for justice and acknowledge the lack of evidence against her by reversing her guilty sentence

Because of the urgency of the situation, the petition is in Spanish.



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

NEWS AND ANALYSIS

News from external sources and analysis by CAWN supporters and members

Armed conflict and violence against women

Guatemala: Affront to Justice - Rios Montt Guilty Verdict Nullified

[MADRE](#) denounces the ruling by Guatemala's Constitutional Court, annulling the May 10 verdict that found former dictator Efraín Rios Montt guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity, targeted against the Indigenous Ixil People.

Over 100 people testified about the brutal violence and massacres that decimated their communities over the months of Rios Montt's regime in 1982-83. They [spoke out](#) about the military attacks that killed their loved ones, destroyed their homes and forced them to flee for their lives. Women testified to the deliberate and widespread use of rape and sexual violence to traumatize and terrorize.

The May 10 verdict finding Rios Montt guilty was a victory for the Indigenous Peoples who have organized for years, struggling for recognition of the human rights violations they faced. We are inspired by the bravery of the witnesses who testified and the determination of Indigenous Peoples to seek justice. Despite harassment and threats against their lives, they persist, even now in the wake of this outrageous ruling.

This trial has been marked by constant and politically-motivated attempts to shield Rios Montt and his co-defendant, José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez, from accountability for the mass killings and rapes that they perpetuated. In this latest setback for justice, Rios Montt's sentence of 80 years has been vacated, and he has been returned to house arrest.

As the trial process continues, MADRE remains steadfast in our commitment to stand with our partners in Guatemala demanding an end to impunity.

Statement of the WHRD IC on Guatemalan genocide trial of Rios Montt and José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez

The WHRD IC stands in solidarity with the Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), survivors,

witnesses, and all those who have bravely worked towards justice in the trial of Guatemala's former dictator and chief of military intelligence for genocide. In the face of a series of threats, intimidation, surveillance, and raids, as well as alarming efforts by the defense lawyers and powerful allies of the defendants to disrupt the trial, the WHRD IC expresses its profound concern for the well-being of all those fighting impunity and condemns all attempts to stymie justice. The WHRD IC calls on the Guatemalan authorities to take all possible actions to ensure a fair, independent and impartial judicial process' in this case.

[More](#)

Honduras: Statement Of The WHRD IC On The Attempted Assassination Of Fidelina Sandoval

The Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC) strongly condemns the attempted assassination of the Honduran journalist and WHRD Fidelina Sandoval, who was shot at outside the television and radio station Globo TV where she works on the morning of 8 April, 2013.

The WHRD IC is disturbed by this attack and expresses its concern for the well-being of Fidelina Sandoval, her family and her colleagues, who have also been targeted. Globo TV alone has experienced multiple attacks including raids and the destruction of equipment, as well as threats, persecution, intimidation and other forms of rights violations and violence against the numerous staff members.

[More](#)

Honduras: IACHR concerned about the rise of femicides and institutional weakness.

[Translated and adapted by CAWN](#)

Honduras is currently on the "black list" of Latin American countries in which most human rights abuses take place, according to the latest annual report by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

During the Third Assembly of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (RedLad) Emilio Álvarez, IACHR Executive Secretary, said the Commission believes the current situation of institutional weakness, impunity and failure to take precautionary measures against femicides in Honduras is serious. He said to the Campaign Against Femicide that the violence and abuses against human rights defenders, the killings of journalists and members of the LGBT community, and violence against women, are of great concern in the area of human rights.

Tracy Robinson, IACHR Rapporteur on the Rights of Women, participated in a meeting with women human rights defenders (WHRDs), women's and feminist organizations and leaders of the indigenous and Garifuna communities of Honduras. Robinson received reports on the persecution of WHRDs and indigenous women, and on femicides. The Women Tribune Against Femicide's report, "[How the threads of impunity are woven](#)", describes the increase in murders and the pattern of cruelty against women's bodies. In 2011, more than 600 cases of murdered women were registered nationwide, according to the Observatory of Violence of the National Autonomous University of Honduras.

"We receive reports from organizations about the numbers of women murdered, a high level of femicide with firearms(...); according to the information we have received, violence rates are not declining but increasing", stressed Robinson. The Observatory has found that 80.5% of crimes in Honduras are committed with firearms. In 2012, 452 women (74.6% of femicides) were killed with this type of weapon. The Honduran law allows the possession of up to 5 guns per person. The National Congress is discussing an amendment to reduce the limit to one.

Robinson also stated the Commission's concern

about the levels of rape affecting young women and children.

Álvarez emphasized that "there are a number of structural conditions, of a sexist culture, a culture of misogyny, an inheritance that generates a dangerous situation for many women; this challenge, which implies strengthening the presence of the State to guarantee the rights of women, should generate conditions for punishing those who generate the threats (...) Violence against women sadly has its worst expression at home; we've found that the most dangerous place for a woman is not necessarily an abandoned place or a lonely alley, but her house, and unfortunately the attackers are often men close to her: the spouse, partner, father, brother, neighbour, uncle, friend, boyfriend".

Robinson said that the state faces many challenges in order to break the cycles of violence that women face. "One of them is impunity. A key concern is to make those who commit the violence accountable and Honduras, like other countries in the region, struggles with the difficulty of ensuring access to justice for victims of violence and of breaking the cycle of violence. This requires effective investigations and a proper process to judge and hold people accountable for their actions. Without that, women will not report the crimes and will not have confidence in the justice system, increasing the impunity of those responsible of the crimes. A key point to strengthen the system is to increase the access victims have to justice", she stated.

The National Campaign Against Femicide held an Alternative Court Against Femicide on June 19, 2013, in order to make the violations of women's rights and the lack of compliance of the principles of equality and non-discrimination before the law in Honduras visible.

UN 57th Commission on the Status of Women: Selection of articles

During the 57th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57), held between 4th and 15th March in the UN headquarters, two panels with special relevance for Central American women took place. These were the panel on "Femicide: Impunity and Discrimination in Mesoamerica", and the panel "Indigenous Women: Building Autonomy for the Eradication of Violence and a Life with Dignity", organised by the *International Indigenous Women Forum* (IIWF or FIMI). This section will provide translations and



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

summaries of some articles related to these two events.

Femicide: Impunity and Discrimination in Mesoamerica

Source: [Radio Internacional Feminista](#)

The panel on "Femicide: Impunity and Discrimination in Mesoamerica", analysed the actions and omissions of States that do not comply with the guarantee of non-repetition of acts of violence against women, including Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala. Over the past 5 and a half years *The National Observatory of Femicide* recorded a total of 4112 cases of femicide in 13 of the 32 states of Mexico.

In Guatemala, according to data by the *Legal Convergence*, a woman is brutally murdered every 12 hours, and 710 women were killed during 2012.

Research presented at the panel showed how the huge gap between the number of complaints of violence and the number of condemnatory sentences is a pattern that is repeated across Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala, showing that impunity in the judicial system is a constant in the Mesoamerican region. Another common point that emerges from the research is the lack of diligence at the moment of recording and taking evidence, which shows how police negligence, laziness and lack of optimal resources become serious impediments to proving the crime of femicide.

"... Every violent death of a woman should be investigated as femicide", were the words of Maria de la Luz Estrada, who explained the process of defining a crime as femicide. She also reminded delegates of the first custodial sentence in Mesoamerica for the crime of femicide. This was issued in November 2009 by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights condemning the Mexican State. She reported on research protocols and the creation of the criminal offence of femicide, as opposed to murder.

"... Violence against women does not disrupt the public order, the paradigms that legitimise this violence remain unaltered..." Silvia Juárez, lawyer from El Salvador, referring to the right of women to access justice. She noted that the current legal system is obsolete in the area of social rights. She showed examples of the legal regulations that discriminate against women, and that have prevailed in the last 60 years in El Salvador, and highlighted some of the laws that are most harmful to women. She gave an overview of the legal obstacles to accessing justice, from the request for help to the official complaint. She also pointed out the responsibility that current the economic and patriarchal model holds in excluding the poorest women from the right to justice.

Afterwards, Carmen Yolanda Téller, a lawyer from the initiative for *Legal Convergence of Women in Guatemala*, gave her presentation. She critiqued judicial investigations and presented the new procedures that are being implemented in Guatemala. The new procedures are designed to enforce the judicial guarantee of due process, such as the *Due Diligence with a Gender Perspective in the Investigations of Femicide in Guatemala*.

"... From childhood, it is dangerous to be a woman" ... Finally Teresa Inchaustegui gave her presentation; professor and researcher at the *Autonomous University of Mexico* and former Mexican MP, she was also the previous chair of the *Committee of Femicide in the House of Representatives* (2009-2012). On behalf of the Cotton Field Sentence (November 2009), which ordered the Mexican state to create a record to address the invisibility of femicide, a national investigation called Femicide Violence in Mexico took place, recording data from 1985 to 2010. She finished by pointing out that the gap between the complaints and the convictions is enormous, which becomes a license to rape and kill women.

[The audio recording of the panellists is available in Spanish.](#)

Indigenous Women: Building Autonomy for the Eradication of Violence and a Life with Dignity **About the Panel**

Source: [Radio Internacional Feminista](#)

On the panel of "Indigenous Women: Building Autonomy for the Eradication of Violence and a Life with Dignity", organized by the IWF, the speakers addressed issues ranging from traditional practices and



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

customs that violate women's rights to the rape of indigenous women committed by armed forces during civil conflicts and wars, and the exclusion of indigenous girls from education systems.

The voices were diverse and came from very different backgrounds.

We heard from Ainne (Malaysia) and Agnes Leina (Kenya), who gave an extraordinarily moving speech about the reality experienced by young girls who herd cattle. Many of these girls are sold or exchanged for animals by their parents. We also heard about the violence that Aboriginal women experience in Australia, through the words of May Louise, a community leader and violence survivor.

The power of the words of Mrs. Rosalina Tuyuc, from the *National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala (Conavigua)*, moved the audience by reminding them of the indigenous women who were raped and killed during the armed conflict in Guatemala. She also demonstrated the determination of the survivors to break the silence and denounce the impunity of the perpetrators.

The panel was moderated by Otilia Lux, executive director of IWWF, and was assisted by Victoria Tauli Corpuz, activist from the Philippines.

[Some audio recordings of the participants' interventions are available in English and others in Spanish.](#)

An earlier interview, by AWID with Otilia Lux, discusses the importance of indigenous women's leadership and the impact this has had in their communities and in international spaces. It also looked at how this has evolved during the last two decades in Latin America, and analysed the factors and the processes affecting the build-up of this leadership.

[Read the whole interview](#)

Outcomes of the Panel

The International Indigenous Women Forum issued a political statement urging the Commission on the Status of Women to take action to address the vulnerability that Indigenous Women suffer. Proposed actions included; the promotion of public policies that include inter-cultural approaches to eradicate and prevent violence against women, the participation of indigenous women in the policy making processes, and consideration of the impact that environmental degradation has on Indigenous communities.

[Political Statement: Indigenous Girls And Women United For A Dignified Life Without Violence](#)

A Panorama Of The Defence Of Human Rights In Mexico: Initiatives And Risks Of Mexican Civil Society

Peace Brigades International is launching its new report on the work of men and women human rights defenders (HRDs) in Mexico, entitled "A Panorama of the Defence of Human Rights in Mexico: Initiatives and Risks of Mexican Civil Society". The publication covers the actions and initiatives of Mexican human rights and social organisations, based on 25 case studies. These were collected in the course of an exploratory mission conducted in six Mexican states during 2012, as well as the experience PBI has gained in its 12 years of international accompaniment work in Guerrero, Oaxaca and Mexico City.

[Read the report](#)

Nicaragua: Changes possible in Law Against Violence toward Women

The Supreme Court President, Alba Luz Ramos, said on May 2 that there was consensus in the court that the Law Against Violence toward Women, also known as Law 779, should be changed to allow for mediation in certain cases. Mediation is not allowed in any case according to the law as it currently stands.

Groups supporting and rejecting changes to this law have been holding demonstrations in recent weeks. The Network against Violence towards Women rejects amendments, and Amnesty International warns against changes, since the current law "provides women with a route to access justice and receive protection against violence" ([more](#))



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //



According to [a poll conducted in April](#) for the Public Opinion Monitoring System of Nicaragua, about 82.3% of all Nicaraguans (and 87.1% of women) support the Law Against Violence Towards Women. The Movement of Unemployed and Working Women María Elena Cuadra (MEC) [has stated its rejection of changes to Law 779](#) and demanded the protection of women from violence and discrimination. From CAWN we show our support for Law 779 and to the groups fighting the modification of this law, which would be detrimental for the victims of violence.

Conservative and Religious Resistance to Law 779 in Nicaragua

Verity Powell studied Development Studies at Birkbeck University and wrote her Master's thesis on the impact of civil war in Colombia on adolescent women. She now lives and works in London.



The introduction of Law 779, an integral law against violence against women, in January 2012 represented a significant move forward for women's rights in Nicaragua. The law was designed to protect the physical, sexual and economic integrity of women, as well as punishing gender-based violence and discrimination, including femicide. It provides women with a route to access justice and protection from violence, and is a significant move forward for Nicaragua in recognising the endemic problem of violence against women. However, almost as soon as the law was passed it came under attack from conservative factions, as well as the church and legislator.

To give a sense of the scale of the problem of violence against women, every year more than 35,000 women in Nicaragua seek medical attention as a result of violence against them. There were more than 85 recorded femicides in 2012, which resulted in only 24 arrests by the police and only four convictions according to the Network of Women Against Violence. There was also a 5% increase in reported rapes between 2011 and 2012, according to police statistics, with more than 80% of the rapes committed against minors.

Because Law 779 bans mediation between the victim of violence and the perpetrator, officials within the church have branded it as “anti-family” and “anti-men”. Whilst Bishop Abelardo Mata went so far as to describe the law as “the anti-Christ”, claiming that the law separates families. Clearly, it is not a law that protects women against violence that tears families apart but the violence committed against women in the first place, as well as the impunity of which perpetrators benefit.

Whilst the church has been pushing its agenda against Law 779, some within the CSJ (Supreme Court of Justice) have also been working to undermine the law. In the first six months after the law was passed magistrates were quoted saying that mediation should be allowed if the sentence is less than five years, in direct defiance of the law.

According to Marta Maria Blandon of civil society organisation Ipas, many state prosecutors and judges are defying the law by continuing to use mediation in cases of domestic abuse, rather than sentencing perpetrators to custodial sentences. In May 2013 the CSJ asked for an amendment to Article 46, which is the article prohibiting mediation between women and their aggressors.

At the same time appeals have been lodged against the law claiming it is unconstitutional. Bismarck Dávila, one of the five lawyers lodging the appeals, claimed that it is unconstitutional because it violates the principle of equality. Citing the special courts and police units established for dealing with violence against women, whilst there is no alternative structure to deal with violence against men by women.



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

Fortunately, when the law was passed with a majority vote of 82 to 10, it had been through an extensive consultation period and the majority in parliament do not support amending the law. The majority of the Nicaraguan population also support Law 779, which will hopefully provide some protection against the attacks from conservative factions, the church and the legislature.

These attacks against Law 779 though represent a divide between the progressive legislature regarding women's rights and violence against women and a prevailing culture of impunity from prosecution and hostility against women's rights from the catholic and evangelist churches and other conservative groups.

Reproductive and Abortion Rights

El Salvador: An abortion or a caesarean section? Beatriz and the global anti-choice spin machine

In El Salvador, Beatriz had an abortion. The Catholic Church and the international anti-choice movement are desperate to deny this reality, so the anti-choice spin machine is in high gear, engaging in linguistic gymnastics to suggest otherwise. And much of the media is taking the bait.

Beatriz had a hysterotomy, a form of abortion carried out through C-section, and a procedure of such high risk compared to other forms of abortion that, according to medical experts, it is practically never performed in the United States. What is known beyond a doubt is that having forced Beatriz into a situation of having a late abortion, the government of El Salvador, Catholic Bishops, and anti-choice groups in the country (and those supporting them from the outside) unquestionably privileged a non-viable foetus over the life and long-term health of the primary patient, a woman who wanted to - in fact begged to - live.

In parroting what anti-choicers and the government of El Salvador are saying, many media outlets are glossing over and ignoring what actually happened in El Salvador.

[More](#)

El Salvador: UN experts urge Government to reconsider current abortion legislation and practice

A group of UN independent experts have urged the Government of El Salvador to reconsider the abortion legislation and current practice in the country. They also reiterated their call on the authorities to ensure the protection and full enjoyment of the right to life, and to the highest attainable standard of health, in accordance with international human rights law.



"It is high time to reconsider the serious consequences on women's rights of the abortion legislation and practice in El Salvador, and to afford the legal protection that all women in the country deserve," the human rights experts said.

On 28 May, the Salvadorian Supreme Court ruled, by a vote decision of four to one, to deny a writ of rights, "*amparo*", to Beatriz to undergo a therapeutic abortion. The judges voting for the ruling considered that the threat to her life was not actual, but eventual. Should health complications imminently place her life at risk, the Court opened the possibility for medical interventions.

The experts strongly condemned the ruling of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of El Salvador rejecting a young woman's request to terminate a life-threatening pregnancy.

[More](#)

Guatemala: The number of pregnant girls is growing

[Translated and adapted by CAWN](#)

Maria Rosa is a 14 year-old girl who gets up at 4AM every day to prepare corn, go to the mill and make *tortillas*. This is the bread of Central American countries like Guatemala. For many hours she carries her daughter on her back (who is now aged



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

one year and four months). Her future is borrowed and she can only think on securing food for her girl and herself.

With the resignation of the subjugated peoples, Maria Rosa - from the Maya-Quiche group - recalls how when she was only 12 she fell in love with a young man who assured her he was single. The teenager soon got pregnant. She didn't notice until one of her sisters became aware of it. Due to the age of the girl - then 13 - the pregnancy was reported and the boyfriend was summoned to a family court. "It was very painful to see him come to the hearing with his wife and three children", says Maria Rosa. The judge decided that the father had to admit the coming child and give her an alimony. A few weeks later he migrated illegally to the United States, rendering the mother and baby utterly helpless.

The difficulties had just begun for María Rosa. Her mother died and her father found a new partner. She sought refuge in her grandmother's house. Extreme poverty has since forced her to work for up to 16-hours daily, for obtaining the minimum livelihood: corn tortillas with salt and a few beans. She is underage, so she cannot register her daughter in the Civil Registry. Her father and grandmother refuse to do it for her. Her baby is legally non-existent.

This isn't an isolated event. According to statistics, the problem is increasing. So far in 2013, in the regional hospital of Quetzaltenango – Guatemala's second biggest city – eight girls aged between 10 and 12 years-old have given birth. An average of 60 underage girls attend an prenatal control month.

In the province, hospital care is minimal and the majority of births are assisted by midwives. Aura Elías, with 25 years of experience, says she assists a monthly average of five deliveries for girls under the age of 14.

According to UNICEF, 54,971 cases of girls younger than 19 giving birth were reported in 2012. "Of these, 3,771 were of girls aged between 10 to 14", said UNICEF representative in Guatemala, Christian Skoog. Thirty-two of these were of 10-year-old girls.

UN statistics specify that Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras as the countries with the highest number of teenage pregnancies in Latin America.

"Guatemala has the highest percentage. It's amongst the ten countries in the world with more documented cases", said Skoog. This also influences the high rate of maternal death: 139 deaths per 100,000 births. Guatemala's neighbour, Costa Rica, has reported just 30 cases.

UNICEF identifies the lack of access to education as the main cause of this phenomenon. "There is a growing commitment to improve access to education, but it's still insufficient. There isn't good quality education. In Guatemala there is a pretty good legal framework, but the state's budget is insufficient to make it work" stresses Skoog, concerned about the circumstances these child-mothers and their babies face. "In adolescence, a woman is not physically able to adequately feed a baby. It compromises the future of every child from the time of birth".

Guatemala: Educational project with young Mayan girls from rural areas.

Nearly 40 per cent of Guatemala's 14 million people belong to one of more than 20 indigenous Mayan groups. A disproportionate number live in poor and isolated rural areas with limited access to basic services such as water, sanitation, education and health.

Opportunities for the young people from these areas are limited. But adolescent girls, in particular, find their future paths are often constrained by discrimination and the traditional practice of child marriage .

"In my village girls do not have access to information nor education", said Sonia Delfina Cho Tún, from the Chitixl community in the lush northern highlands of the country. "There isn't a local high school. We only get to study to sixth grade. Mostly girls marry at age 15, not knowing what their future holds for them and their children". Parents force them because they say that when they reach age 20 and are single, they can no longer find a husband and are left to grow old alone.

A UN project has focused on keeping this group engaged in formal education. The project is called *Abriendo Oportunidades* (Opening opportunities).

[More about the project](#)



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion launches a new website

On the 28th May, the International Day of Action for Women's Health, the International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe abortion launched a [new website](#), marking a year since the campaign was launched. Since then, more than 700 groups and individuals from all regions of the world have endorsed it. In case you haven't endorsed the

campaign, [there is still time to do it](#).

The International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion and all its partners encourage people to be proactive in advocating for access to safe and legal abortion worldwide, and have also suggested starting planning actions around September 28, the International Day of Action for the Decriminalization of Abortion.

Women and the Media

Feminism and revolution: Interview with María Suárez Toro

María Suarez Toro is a Puerto Rican and Costa Rican journalist, feminist scholar, university professor, peace and women's human rights activist with decades of experience working with liberation movements in Central America. She is the author of numerous books, book chapters, and articles. María is currently the co-founder of Escribana, a social network initiative in media and communications by and about women in their communities.

María is also an activist in Petateras, a feminist activist initiative in the MesoAmerican region (Central America, Mexico and Panama). María was one of 25 participants on a human rights delegation in Honduras from March 16-25. The delegation met with community members and social movement activists fighting against issues including mining, monoculture agriculture, mega-tourism, "model cities", land theft, displacement, and labour exploitation. At the end of the delegation Upside Down World spoke with María and asked her to reflect on what she saw and heard, while giving additional historical and political context based on her past experiences fighting for social justice.

[Read the whole interview](#)

Honduras: Acquittal of Berta Caceres and Tribune Against Femicides

The Network *Nosotras en el Mundo* reports (in Spanish) on the acquittal of Berta Caceres, Honduran leader of the campesino movement, and on the Alternative Court Against Femicides, which took place on the 19th of June. Berta Caceres was brought to court in May and criminalized for her resistance to corporations taking over indigenous peoples' land.

[Listen to the report](#)

Radio soap operas from International Mediatraining 'The use of radio as a tool for social change'

On the second day of the training, during the session "The power of Fiction", led by Seidy Salaz, the trainees were encouraged to create a story that could be radio-dramatised, that engaged the listener and which, despite being simple, carried a message for change. The results were impressively good, given that just a morning and an afternoon were dedicated to the script writing and recording of four fictional stories of labour and sexual exploitation and gender and racial discrimination, which although fiction, are rooted in real experience.

[Download the radio dramas](#)



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

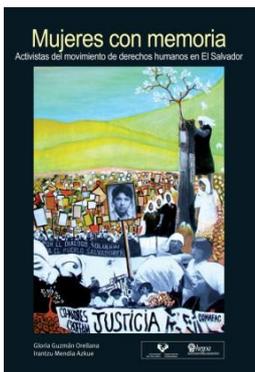
WOMEN'S STRUGGLES

El Salvador - Women with Memory

Translated and adapted by CAWN

A new book on women human rights activists in El Salvador, *Mujeres con Memoria* (Women with memory), by Iranzu Mendia and Gloria Guzman, has been launched recently. The book starts with two ideas. The first is that "throughout history, women's work for human rights and peace has been condemned to oblivion and silenced". By ignoring women's history and contributions to processes of social change, women have been invisibilised and their political and transformatory experiences denied. The second is that in El Salvador the protagonists of the human rights movement's work have been largely women. "Female leadership has been key in finding missing persons, in the defence of political prisoners, the public denunciation of human rights violations, the exhumations, the case investigation and litigation in national and international courts, the education for peace and memory". However, these struggles have not always been properly registered or weighted in the analyses of the war and post-war period.

This publication seeks three objectives: to contribute to the study and visibility of the role of women activists in the Salvadoran human rights movement; to reinforce the memory work done by the victims and their families, for whom this memory has become a way of not forgetting and breaking the silence; and to explore from a historical perspective some of the most significant practices of women human rights activists, both as victims of violence and as protagonists of important events in recent Salvadoran history.

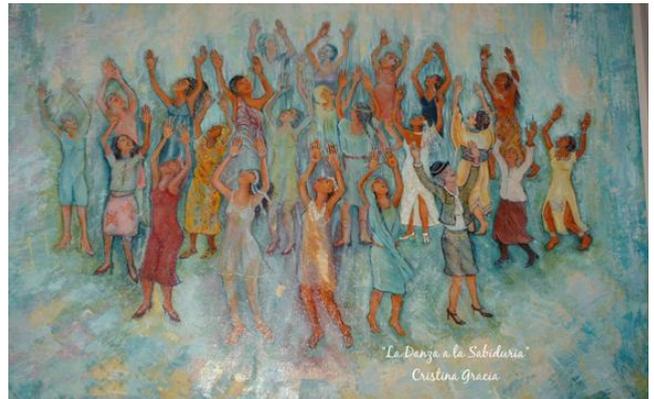


Inauguration of the Feminist Theology School in El Salvador

At the end of June, the Association of Catholic Women for the Right to Decide of El Salvador inaugurated the Feminist Theology School, which will take place from July until December 2013. The

program will be structured around three fundamental topics: History of Feminist Theology; Women's Human Rights, an ethical and theological commitment; and sexuality and corporeality.

Juan José Tamayo, member of the Association of Theologians John XXIII and known advocate of



Liberation Theology, was invited for the inaugural speech, in which he developed the next five points:

1. Religions have never had a good relationship with women – not even today –, who have been the eternally forgotten and the great losers;
2. Religions have used all kinds of violence against women: physical, psychological, religious and symbolic;
3. However, women are the most faithful followers of religious precepts, the best educators in the different faiths and, paradoxically, the best at reproducing the patriarchal structure of religions;
4. There's an increasing number of women who rebel against religions without abandoning religious spaces; they organise autonomously, depart from the moral guidelines imposed by the religious patriarchy and live their religious experience from their own subjectivity, without having to go through the mediation of men;
5. From this rebellion in all religions has emerged a new way of thinking and reformulating religious beliefs and practices: the feminist theology.

[Inauguration conference speech \(Spanish\)](#)



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

Honduras: CPTRT Statement of solidarity with family of murdered peasant woman.

Translated by CAWN

The Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and their Families (CPTRT) expresses its solidarity with the family of Miranda Marilú Orellana, a 41 years old peasant woman who was killed near her home as she returned from working on the land, in the municipality of San Manuel, in the department of Cortes.

Miranda Orellana was the mother of five children who now are left without her protection and shelter. She was part of the Campesino Movement of San Manuel (MOCSAM).

Three days ago [May 17], three farmers were killed by security guards from the CAHSA Honduran Sugar Company, which has numerous British shareholders.

We demand justice for the murdered peasants, and that the State hands over the land and that the shedding of more peasant blood is stopped.

Tegucigalpa, 20th May, 2013.

Political statement of networks and organisations gathered in Mexico: "Deepening democracy and rules of law that fulfil Women's Human Rights. It is about time already"

Organizations and feminists, academics and human rights women networks from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, (...)participants in the international seminar "Incidence on the Network: The Challenge of States to Fulfil Women's

Human Rights", held from May 7 to May 10, 2013 in Mexico City, express the following:

WE DENOUNCE that women in the three continents, represented at this Seminar, have experienced structural injustice, the result of the environmental-energetic, food, economical and political crisis of the capitalist patriarchal system; as well as the interference of fundamentalist religious groups in issues related to the State, which consolidates and deepens new forms of exploitation, social control, violence, subordination and criminalization of human rights defenders and social movements.

[Read the whole statement](#)

Civil Society Organizations Call on the OAS For a New Security Model, Demilitarization and Human Rights

More than 160 civil society organizations representing hundreds of thousands of citizens in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the United States, sent an open letter to the OAS General Assembly calling for alternatives to the war on drugs that guarantee respect for human rights.

"Our organizations have documented an alarming increase in violence and human rights violations. While we recognize that transnational crime and drug-trafficking play a role in this violence, we call on our governments to acknowledge that failed security policies that have militarized citizen security have only exacerbated the problem, and are directly contributing to increased human suffering in the region," the letter states.

[More](#)

A look at the reality of Honduras in the pre-election stage

Mirta Kennedy is the director of CEM-H (Centro de Estudios de la Mujer de Honduras), a civil organisation that aims to transform the social, economic and cultural structures that maintain discrimination and violence against women, and to promote a more inclusive, fair and equal society.

The context of Honduras is characterized by a high concentration of wealth and widespread poverty, violence and general insecurity, the occupation of the territory by drug-trafficking activities, and militarization resulting from the U.S. strategy for the region, in the so-called "war on drugs".

According to ECLAC data, Honduras is the Latin American country with the highest poverty rate (67.4%), with 42.8% of the poor living in destitution. Honduras also has a high concentration of income: the richest 20% of the population receive 60.9% of the country's income, while the poorest 20% receive only 2.5%.

This poorest sector of the population is mostly young women (1.2), with low education, settled in rural



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

areas and destitute. Data collected for Latin America shows that in Honduras the population under 18 years accounts for 50% of those affected by poverty, 45% of those in poverty over 18 have not finished primary education, 60% of the poorest women are outside the paid labour market, and of those working, 40% do so as domestic workers. Self-employment for subsistence, the widespread precariousness of salaries and unemployment, are factors that generate the exclusion of 45.3% of the economically active population in Honduras.

While Latin America has been recognised worldwide during the last decade for its significant achievements in overcoming poverty, the case of Honduras contrasts with this general picture, where two out of three Honduran do not reach the minimum living standards.

Violence indicators show Honduras as the country with the highest homicide rate in relation to all countries where there is no war declared, with an annual average of 85.5 homicides per hundred thousand inhabitants, which means more than 7,000 homicides per year and 19 lives lost every day. Some of them are victims of the war on drugs, imposed by U.S. geopolitics in the region, and conflicts between organized crime gangs for the control of territory and markets.

Most of these are young men involved in the production of violence who become victims of it. But there are other important and not very visible victims of crime, a result of the political persecution of social movement activists, advocates of human rights, journalists and honest civil servants who take action against corruption and the delinquency entrenched in state structures; peasants that defend their lands and territories, lawyers who litigate on behalf of the poor, teachers that have taken to the streets to defend democratic institutions and their rights, members of the LGBT community who have been victims of hate crimes, and the high number of femicides, of women murdered just for being women.

Honduras has one of the highest rates of femicides in the region, similar to those in Guatemala and El Salvador, with 412 cases of femicide in 2012 and an annual rate over one hundred thousand inhabitants reaching epidemic levels (above 10 per cent thousand). Femicides are the killing of women because they are women, an expression of misogyny, discrimination and the extreme inequality of power in gender relations. Femicides are related to scenarios of intimate violence by partners or former partners, sexual assault, retaliation against third parties taken in the bodies of women in actions by gangs and organized crime mafias, dispossession of women from their goods (land, housing, inheritance), and other gender-based violence scenarios that show patriarchal power over women, particularly over those who are exposed to vulnerability on social, economic, age, sexual, or other grounds.

The public insecurity and violence in Honduras are combined with the persistence of domestic and family violence, the number one cause of complaints to the police nationwide. Organized crime operates with impunity in the country, which has become a transit route for the trade of cocaine and other illegal drugs into the U.S. and other destinations. The U.S. State Department maintains that 79% of all drug-carrying planes from South America pass through Honduras. The imposition of a geopolitical strategy of the war against drugs has served as a pretext for an increasing militarization of the country. It has strengthened the presence of foreign military (mostly from the U.S.) with new military bases, more troops and advisers, cooperation funds and loans for military aid, arms sales, direct action that violates the country's sovereignty. The army is taking the role of the police in public order surveillance (cities, roads, rural, industrial and touristic areas), tasks that constitutionally correspond to the police forces, and is taking control over the police as the result of the intervention approved by the National Congress for the treatment of the outrageous infiltration of organised crime, which also permeates the attorney, the judiciary and other state institutions.

A set of new laws points to the rise of military power.

On top of these legal forces, in different parts of the country there is the presence paramilitary forces, gunmen and shock groups which serve the highest bidder, such as organized crime and even businessmen that aim to grab land that the state has allocated to peasant groups. In the country there are large numbers of private security companies and troops (706 companies and some 70,000 troops)



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

that primarily serve private business in different sectors: industry, trade, services. The United Nations has called the government's attention to these, due to their high numbers and the lack of control over them. Honduras lacks legislation for gun control. In the current legal framework, each adult citizen can have up to five fire arms legally. Eighty per cent of femicides and almost 90% of all homicides are committed with firearms.

The militarization of Honduras occurs in a context in which the country is the focus of strategic transnational interests as a supplier of natural resources (forests, rivers, soil, subsoil, air) for hydropower development, open pit and underground mining, exploration of untapped oil fields, wind-power companies, monoculture as palm, and land reserved for future installations of services framed by the recent law for the creation of Special Development Schemes (Charter Cities). Since the *coup d'état* (June 2009), the Lobo Sosa administration has conducted an accelerated process of legal reforms, aimed at a deep structural reform of the state, in which the privatization of public companies, the concession of land under different actors and the transfer of sovereignty from the state to investors, transnational corporations and foreign countries are central.

These changes have helped to reinforce extractive economy model for development and have worsened the situation of the rural population and indigenous peoples, who are threatened with dispossession of their lands and displacement, and that of the urban economy based on the trade of imported consumer goods, which discourages domestic production, increases food dependency, results in economic migration within and outside the country, and leads to poverty, social and gender inequality, violence and social injustice.

The country will have presidential, legislative and municipal elections in November 2013. The breakdown of bipartisanship has been a consequence of the political maturity of the people of Honduras who, since the *coup d'état*, have lost faith in the traditional parties, especially in the leaders who were complicit in the breakdown of the country's institutions and the violation of the constitution.

The *Libertad y Refundación-LIBRE* Party (Freedom and Refundation), which integrates much of the popular resistance to the *coup*, and the Anti-Corruption Party, PAC, are emerging as the new political forces which attract the majority of the sympathy from the public and the greatest number of voters, according to specialized surveys. However, a profound disappointment regarding the political system prevails in the public, who feel that the country is on the verge of electoral fraud and that little can be done through the action of citizens; and who believe that the ruling party and its candidate – the current president of the National Congress – will win the presidency through fraud and corruption. This context could lead to a scenario of social protest, which could be addressed with police and military repression. But it also could lead to a scenario of hope that could lead to a plural National Congress, with new voices of men and women who act with honesty and adherence to democratic principles and human rights, and of citizens who stay organized in order to respond peacefully to fraud and repression through mobilisation and social organisation.

On the one hand, the *coup* strengthened conditions for the hegemonic business class to continue profiting through interference in and control of the state, creating new alliances with transnational corporations for the exploitation of natural resources and increasing militarisation by national and foreign forces to maintain control over the national territory and population. This has resulted in deepening inequality, poverty, violence, crime, corruption, injustice and the excessive extractive exploitation of nature. On the other hand, the context after the *coup* shows a broad, diverse and organised social movement, which is building new alliances and creating new political forces for social justice across classes, which are animated to eradicate poverty, hunger and injustice. This movement is animated to take Honduras along a path of respect for human rights, gender equality, social justice, and environmental awareness to help reduce the impact of climate change and build a more sustainable economic model which includes a social economy in which organised civic participation and the equal inclusion of women will enable respect for the rights of women and a better life for everyone.



CAWN

SUMMER 2013 // NEWSLETTER //

CAWN'S PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

This section features partners and other organizations we work closely with

Agrupación Ciudadana por la Despenalización del Aborto Terapéutico, Ético y Eugénico

The Citizens Group for the Legalization of Therapeutic, Ethic and Eugenic Abortion emerged in 2009 in El Salvador, as a multidisciplinary organisation, integrated by both men and women. Its main purposes are:

- To promote public awareness in order to change the existing legislation on abortion in the country;
- To give legal defence for women who have been convicted or are being accused of abortions or related criminalised actions;
- To publicise the need for women to receive adequate assistance to ensure sexual and reproductive health and to avoid them having to resort to unsafe abortions that endanger their lives;
- To promote the strengthening of the association's members
- To coordinate with other organised groups to conduct joint campaigns and activities;
- To promote the adoption of state measures to prevent the criminalisation of women attending public hospitals, who are at often reported by medical and administrative staff for abortion, in contravention of the presumption of innocence;
- To begin a national dialogue with the Salvadoran State, on the rights of women to sexual and reproductive health.

Centro de Estudios de la Mujer

The *Centro de Estudios de la Mujer - Honduras* (Centre of Women Studies - Honduras), or CEM-H, is a not-for-profit NGO established in 1986. It's an autonomous feminist organisation with no political or religious affiliation, whose political principles, objectives and goals are targeted at improving the condition of Honduran women, especially those in a low-income situation, who account for the majority of the country and region's female population.

It aims to contribute to building a society defined by gender equity, democracy and by social and economic justice, in order to eliminate poverty and violence and other forms of discrimination that affect the quality of life of Honduran women.

CEM-H carries out advocacy to change public policy, to enable women to fully exercise their rights and to achieve a better quality of life for them. It also contributes to the strengthening of the organisational capacity and leadership of young and adult women and of the social movement in Honduras and the Central American region.

CEM-H is integrated into the feminist movement in Honduras and Central America, and contributes to the construction of inclusive and diverse policy proposals that will lead to sustainable social transformations

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