



Churches and Mining Network condemns murder of social communicator in Honduras and demands justice

From various parts of Latin America, the people, institutions, and church communities that make up the Churches and Mining Network condemn with energy and pain the murder of the human rights defender and social communicator, Pablo Isabel Hernández, which occurred on Sunday, January 9 in the municipality of San Marcos de Caiquín, department of Lempira, when unknown men shot him in the back while he was on his way to church, where he was an active pastoral agent.

We demand that the Honduran authorities carry out a prompt, exhaustive, and independent investigation that includes among its lines of inquiry the human rights work carried out by Pablo Hernández, allowing for the punishment of those materially and intellectually responsible for this murder.

The social communicator Hernández was a recognized Lenca indigenous leader who defended and promoted the rights of his people from various platforms: as director of the Tenán Community Radio, Mayor of the Auxiliary of the Vara Alta de Caiquín, president of the Network of Agroecologists of the Cacique Lempira Biosphere, was a member of the Network of Human Rights Defenders of the department of Lempira, and also promoted the creation of the Lenca Indigenous and Peoples' University.

Five years ago, Mr. Hernández assumed the direction of the radio station mentioned above, and from that platform, he questioned the local administration of San Marcos de Caiquín. He also rebroadcast the program "Voices against oblivion" of the Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH). In addition, Hernández repeatedly made public his situation of risk, the threats received to close the community media, and the sabotage of his electrical installation in February 2021.

We join our voices to the national and international people and institutions that condemn this murder because silencing the voices of those who defend human rights, the rights of Mother Nature, and those who inform society is an attack against democracy and the rights of communities.

Honduras, unfortunately, is one of the most dangerous countries for democratic people. In 2021, violent incidents against some 208 human rights defenders and 93 journalists were recorded, of which 10 were murders of human rights defenders.

We call on international opinion to mobilize to guarantee the truth, justice, and reparation for the victims of these crimes in Honduras and all our countries. Likewise, to defend and support journalists and media outlets that promote democracy, defend the rights of people, communities, and nature.

We express our solidarity with the family of the indigenous leader, social communicator, pastoral agent, and rights defender Pablo Hernández, with his colleagues of the community radio and with the Lenca indigenous community of San Marcos de Caiquín.

We urge President-elect Xiomara Castro, who will assume the leadership of Honduras in the coming days, to promote the necessary reforms that allow the enforcement of human rights, the fight against impunity, and the application of prompt, timely, and comprehensive justice, as fundamental duties of the Rule of Law.

Latin America January 10, 2022

<https://iglesiasymineria.org/2022/01/10/red-iglesias-y-mineria-condena-asesinato-de-comunicador-social-en-honduras-y-exige-justicia/>