

URGENT ACTION



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Note: Please write on behalf of these persons even though you may not have received the original UA when issued on January 21, 2011. Thanks!

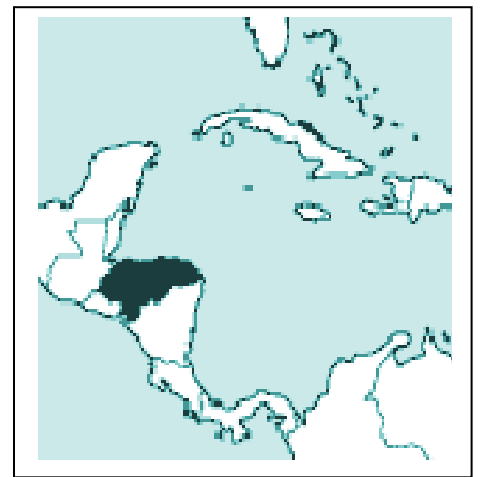
14 June 2011

Further Information on UA 012/11 (21 January 2011) – Fear for safety

HONDURAS **Alexander David Sánchez Álvarez (m)**

LGBT activist and human rights defender Alex David Sánchez Álvarez was threatened at gunpoint for the third time this year, on 8 June. Amnesty International believes that his life is in danger.

On the morning of 8 June, at about 8.10am, Alex David Sánchez Álvarez was on his way to the Centro de Prevencion, Tratamiento y Rehabilitacion de las Victimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares - CPTRT (Centre for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and their Families) where he works as a nurse. Alex David Sánchez Álvarez had just got out of a taxi three blocks away from the office when he walked closely by a beige car with tinted windows which was in stationary traffic. In the car there were three men dressed in the special uniform of the police "Cobra" unit. The passenger in the front wound the window down, pointed a gun at Alex David Sánchez Álvarez and said, "This is the little queer [...] yes it's you" (Ese es el mariconcito [...] si sos vos). Alex David Sánchez Álvarez turned and ran, and hid in a nearby building, where he wrote down the car's number plate and reported the incident to the Public Prosecutor's Office.



Alex David Sánchez Álvarez is very active in the LGBT community, working and volunteering for a number of LGBT and human rights organisations. This is the third time this year he has been threatened with a pistol.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In January 2011, Alex David Sánchez Álvarez was threatened and physically attacked by men using pistols twice in five days. These assaults happened near the offices of two human rights organisations that Alex David Sánchez Álvarez works for - Colectivo Violeta and Centro de Prevencion, Tratamiento y Rehabilitacion de las Victimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares - CPTRT (Centre for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and their Families). Those responsible have not yet been identified.

Amnesty International is concerned about the environment faced by activists and other members of the LGBT community in Honduras. Attacks are rarely investigated thoroughly, and there is not enough protection for those who come forward to report these crimes. In a case documented by Amnesty International, in December 2009, the LGBT human rights activist Walter Trochez was murdered in Tegucigalpa. This happened nine days after he had escaped after being abducted by several masked men demanding the names and addresses of members of the movement opposing the June 2009 coup d'etat. His captors apparently told him they had orders to kill him. The investigations into this case have not yet led to any indictments or convictions.

Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

Amnesty International in its 2010 report on Honduras highlighted the sharp rise in the number of killings of transgender women following the June 2009 coup. Between 2003 and March 2009, human rights organizations had registered 17 cases of killings of transgender women. Between the end of June and December 2009, 12 such cases were reported by local human rights organizations. No data was available at the time about investigations into these killings.

In April 2010, Amnesty expressed its concern on the situation of LGBT people in Honduras in its Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review - Ninth Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council (AI Index: AMR 37/005/2010). The document is available at:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR37/005/2010/en/79e58f10-220d-40ff-ab81-464b56aa439b/amr370052010en.pdf>

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please write immediately in Spanish or in your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to order an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats made against Alex David Sánchez Álvarez, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to take immediate steps to provide full and appropriate protection to Alex David Sánchez Álvarez in accordance with his wishes;
- Reminding them 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.

APPEALS TO:

Minister for Justice and Human Rights

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Salutation: Estimada Sra. Ministra

Attorney General

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Salutation: Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

NGO

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 26 July 2011.