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<http://www.rsf.org/honduras-rwb-alerts-minister-to-case-of-08-01-2013,43871.html>

Americas - Honduras

Police threats

RWB alerts minister to case of journalist threatened by her "protectors"

8 January 2013

Ana Pineda, Minister of Justice and Human Rights
Ramon Custodio, Honduran Human Rights Commissioner

Dear Minister/Dear Commissioner

Reporters Without Borders, an international organization that campaigns for freedom of information, urges you to take immediate action to ensure effective protection for the journalist and human rights activist **Itsmania Erohyna Pineda Platero**.

Reporters Without Borders has previously [campaigned on her behalf](#), together with other international organizations, after a demonstration in Tegucigalpa in December 2011 by the "Journalism for life and free expression" collective which was harshly broken up by the presidential guard. The protesters were merely calling for justice for 30 of their colleagues who had been murdered in the course of the previous decade, 25 of them since the coup in June 2009.

Itsmania Pineda Platero, founder and head of the human rights organization [Xibalba Arte y Cultura](#), has told us she has again been the victim of harassment by police officers whom she had accused of involvement in cases of corruption. She has been subjected to constant online threats via Skype and Twitter, her e-mail and blog have been the targets of cyber-attacks, she has been prevented several times from moving around freely and was finally forced to close her organization's office. On each occasion she has registered a complaint, to no avail so far.

As part of an operation to clean up the force, two senior police officers responsible for the journalist's safety, Generals Somoza and Suazo, were removed from their posts. Their successor, Commissioner Navas, was murdered soon afterwards. The protection of Itsmania Pineda Platero passed to Victoriano Lopez Centeno, a non-commissioned officer against whom she had made a number of allegations of criminal activities.

The National Directorate of Criminal Investigation (DNIC) opened an investigation last month into the threats against the journalist. The investigation was entrusted to the head of the organization's analysis department, Adan del Cid, and a police officer, Marvin García Cardenas.

The somewhat incomplete report mentions only Lopez Centeno and takes no account of the activities of two other officers also cited by Itsmania Pineda Platero: Roque Jacinto Martinez and Lizandro Cruz Gudiel. The first is a member of the DNIC's analysis department. The second, who has now resigned, had entered the journalist's home in 2010. A few months ago, he stopped his motorcycle in front of her, blocking her route, removed his helmet and asked her if she remembered him.

Itsmania Pineda Platero must not remain under the supervision, i.e. surveillance, of a police officer against whom she has given evidence. Similarly, it is incomprehensible that the investigation into the threats against her should be carried out by officials from the same department as one of the suspects. Inquiries should resume in accordance with correct procedure.

Reporters Without Borders is also concerned about the fate of Maria Isabel Barahona Morales, the other co-founder of the Xibalba organization who is also in danger. Having received death threats, she is keen to leave the country as soon as she can to join her three daughters abroad. However, in a recent bizarre development, her surname has been altered in the civil registry, preventing her from leaving the country. This must be rectified forthwith, allowing her to seek shelter.

The involvement of the police in [numerous human rights violations](#) in recent years cannot be ignored.

I thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Christophe Deloire, Secretary General, Reporters Without Borders
