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<http://www.rsf.org/honduras-more-threats-and-attacks-on-human-23-08-2012,43275.html>

Americas - Honduras

Threats

More threats and attacks on human rights activists

23 August 2012

There have been more cases of [human rights activists](#), civil society representatives and journalists being harassed and threatened.

In one of the latest instances, [Radio Progreso](#) contributor **Roberto García** and fellow environmentalist Cesar Alvarenga were threatened on 17 August in connection with their opposition to a mining project in Arizona, a community 30 km outside the northern city of Tela.

At the same time, the lawyer and civil society activist Gloria Vásquez Pérez has been the target of repeated threats and attacks in recent months.

Reporters Without Borders is very worried about their safety and reiterates its call to the Honduran authorities to give them protection. Because of the leading role they play in circulating information, *Radio Progreso* and community radio stations are [constantly threatened](#).

Security measures should be adopted to protect these media and the many people who are being harassed and threatened, and to guarantee the entire population's right to information and free speech. The authorities nonetheless continue to ignore such calls, even when they come from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Gunmen went to Alvarenga's road transport company in Arizona on 17 August and left a letter threatening him and García and demanding that they stop opposing the mining project being promoted by the Tela municipal authorities. The "messengers" displayed their guns in order to intimidate the company's employees.

When García and Alvarenga were previously pressured by local politicians to become advocates of the project and to help overcome the objections of most of the region's population, García revealed the names of the politicians applying the pressure.

The lawyer and activist Vásquez meanwhile continues to be the target of intimidation attempts although she filed a complaint about an assault near her home at around 9 p.m. on 26 May, when an unidentified man grabbed her, threw her to the ground and tried to strangle her, leaving her for dead.

Last week, after she got into a collective taxi that seemed to be waiting for her, the driver and the other person aboard threatened her, searched her bag and told her: "We know where you work and where you live. Don't look at us or we will kill you."

There have been repeated physical attacks on NGO and labour representatives, civil society activists, human rights lawyers, academics and [journalists](#) ever since the [June 2009 coup](#), and almost all of them have gone unpunished.

The police are nonetheless very diligent when it comes to dispersing protests. Around 20 people were injured and 27 were arrested when police broke up a demonstration two days ago in Tegucigalpa by peasants from the northern [Aguán region](#) pressing for implementation of a court ruling returning seized land to them – a ruling that was overturned as a result of pressure from big landowners.

Those arrested included Antonio Trejo, the peasants' lawyer; Carlos Ramón Navarro, the head of the Honduran National Peasants Association (ANACH); Johnny Rivas, the general secretary of the Aguán Unified Peasants Movement (MUCA) and Vitalino Álvarez, its spokesman. Reporters Without Borders reported a few months ago that Álvarez had been the target of threats.
