

Sr. Porfirio Lobo Sosa
Presidente de la República
Casa Presidencial
Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo
Palacio José Cecilio del Valle
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Fax: + 504 239 3298

Re: Concerns regarding the case of lawyer Ms Kenia Olivia Cardona

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which, through the national Bars and Law Societies of the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area, represents around one million European lawyers. In addition to membership from EU bars, it has also observer representatives from a further eleven European countries' bars.

The CCBE, through its Human Rights Committee, places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The CCBE is particularly concerned by the situation of human rights defenders in the world.

We are writing to express our serious concerns over the recent car break-in of Ms Kenia Olivia Cardona, a lawyer who works with the Honduran human rights organization Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras, COFADEH).

We understand that during the break-in, documents related to a course in human rights law which Kenia Oliva is studying for were taken, while valuable items such as the car radio were left behind. The laptop computer stolen from the car boot contained confidential information related to COFADEH's work. It is, thus, suspected that she has been targeted because of her human rights work, and she may be in danger.

Especially worrisome is that it appears that this is not an isolated incident. The left-side wheel bolts at the front of her car were loosened last year while she was defending the 49 farmers who had occupied the offices of the *Instituto Nacional Agrario* (INA). Her car had been parked in front of the police station.

In November 2009, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) called on the Honduran authorities to protect Kenia Oliva, along with another 16 members of COFADEH and their immediate families. It would appear that this order has not been effectively implemented, leaving Kenia Oliva and the other 16 COFADEH members at risk.

In this context, the CCBE wishes to draw to your attention the following Articles of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (1990):

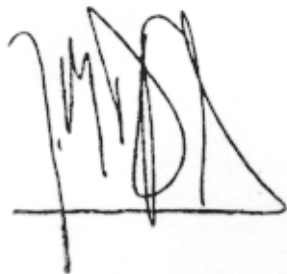
Article 16 states that:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

In view of the above, the CCBE respectfully urges you to investigate the above mentioned facts and to take immediate and effective steps to guarantee the safety of Ms Kenia Olivia Cardona and the other 16 COFADEH staff and their immediate families in line with the IACHR request of 17 November 2009, in order to preserve the independence and integrity of the administration of justice in Honduras.

We urge you also to ensure that all actions and threats against lawyers for the legitimate exercise of their professional duties are immediately and effectively stopped.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JMD', written over a horizontal line.

JOSÉ-MARÍA DAVÓ-FERNÁNDEZ
President