

Joint submission to the fourth UN Universal Periodic Review of Honduras

April 2025



A report jointly drafted with forty indigenous Lenca and Maya Chortí environmental human rights defenders from the departments of La Paz, Intibucá and Copan

Background

- This report is based on first hand testimonies of and recommendations **jointly drafted by forty indigenous Lenca and Maya Chortí environmental human rights defenders** from the departments of La Paz, Intibucá and Copan at workshops held in 2025.
- The group included leaders and members of indigenous councils including women and youth councils. Quotes in this report are from the participants, with their identities protected.
- The primary focus of this report is **the safety and security of environmental human rights defenders** followed by related issues that the group identified as important for the Honduran government to address.
- The recommendations on how to improve the National Protection Mechanism (NPM) have been formed on the basis of evidence from current beneficiaries and those who have been unable to access it.
- We also reviewed recommendations that were made to the state of Honduras at the 2020 UPR review and heard minimal progress had been achieved.
- **Submitting organisations:** Christian Aid www.christianaid.org.uk (main submitting organisation), Centro de Desarrollo Humano (CDH) www.centrocdh.org, Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM) www.casm.hn and Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH) www.ocdih.org. Contact akurien@christian-aid.org for further information.
- We would also like to thank colleagues from SOMOS CDC, PBI Honduras and Cristosal for sharing valuable analysis which contributed to this report.
- **Cover photo:** Members of Lenca indigenous councils meet at a forum in Intibucá to discuss breaking barriers to access justice with the accompaniment of CDH. Photo: Fernando Amaya, CDH, November 2023

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Lethal attacks against environmental human rights defenders

1. Human rights defenders in Honduras, especially those advocating for the right to a healthy environment¹ and to protect land and natural resources continue to face severe **harassment, intimidation, violence and murder**. In 2024 alone, of the 319 victims of targeted attacks recorded by the OHCHR, the highest proportion of those affected (47%), were defenders of land, territory and the environment.²
2. Many of these defenders are from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities that solely rely on subsistence agriculture for their livelihood. They face threats from a range of actors including state authorities, business elites, mining companies and drug traffickers. Widespread impunity, corruption, and ineffective security and justice systems have resulted in perpetrators rarely being held accountable.
3. Even precautionary measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) are often poorly implemented by the state and have failed to protect defenders, as the tragic killings of environmental defenders Juan López and Berta Cáceres reveal.

“The danger we face as environmental defenders shows that authorities consider gold, silver and natural resources are more valuable than human life. We put the wellbeing of our families at risk to enjoy the little piece of land that God has allowed us to have”

Indigenous human rights defender, La Paz

Failures of the National Protection Mechanism

4. **Ten years on** from the creation of the **National Protection Mechanism (NPM)**³, which was set up by the government to provide targeted safety measures for ‘human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice operators’, it continues to **be inaccessible, ineffective and lacks independence**. Structural reform to the mechanism is urgently required. The mechanism is part of the National Protection System and was an outcome of the National Protection Law which was established as a result of advocacy from civil society, IACHR and UN member states’ UPR recommendations.

“The police liaison who was assigned to me as a user of the National Protection Mechanism was the same one who had previously arrested me on false charges”

Indigenous human rights defender, Intibucá

5. The **staffing** and decision-making bodies of the mechanism are currently **dominated by state officials**. The lack of independence of the NPM has left its workings vulnerable to political interference. Over the years, state authorities have been charged as a perpetrator and/or as complicit in several cases involving the murder and harassment of human rights defenders. This is one of the main reasons why trust in the mechanism is very low among rights defenders and they are reluctant to apply to it.

6. Of the five bodies that make up the NPM, only one of them- the National Protection Council (El Consejo Nacional de Protección), has human rights defenders represented on it. This is limited to two individuals, neither of whom are from indigenous backgrounds. In February 2025, the national congress **passed reforms to the NPM without consulting civil society or beneficiaries**.⁴ One of the changes was the addition of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA) to the National Protection Council, which further exacerbates the imbalance in representation between state and civil society.⁵

7. Defenders note that it takes several months for NPM staff to complete a risk assessment after they submit an application. In some cases, **the risk assessments are carried out over the phone, further compromising safety and security**.

8. In a 2022 diagnostic of the NPM,⁶ the UN noted that the **NPM’s risk assessment criteria was overly reliant on security incidents already having taken place** and recommended that it should instead move the weight of emphasis to *“elements such as the profile of the victim, the activities they carry out and the interests they affect, the context in which they carry out their work and the mapping of relevant actors and their relationships; all of this would allow a preventive approach to be strengthened and action to be taken before there is a record of incidents”*.⁷ **There is no clarity whether this has been implemented as the workings and criteria used by the NPM continues to be opaque**.

9. The UN also noted in the same report that the budget of the NPM was inadequate. According to a Freedom of Information request submitted by Centro de Estudio Para la Democracia (CESPAD),⁸ while the budget was increased in 2023, it was then **reduced by over half in 2024**.

Year (Gestión)	Approved Budget – National Protection Mechanism (in Lempiras) (Presupuesto Aprobado Sistema Nacional de Protección)
2021	10,438,584.00
2022	12,730,296.00
2023	32,015,833.00
2024	15,510,299.00

10. **The majority of the NPM budget is currently being spent on expensive security measures for state appointed officials**. This disproportionately affects human rights defenders who constitute the majority of applicants.

11. A report issued by the NPM in 2023 revealed that **83% of the budget was spent on 6 of the 185 active cases**, whose recipients were public officials.⁹

12. This is especially concerning as government officials at risk have other mechanisms they can access. In 2021, the National Congress established the Special Protection Unit under the 2013 *Law on the Special Protection of Officials and Former Officials at Extraordinary Risk*.

“Sadly the NPM is applicable to too broad a group. It should be restricted to independent journalists and human rights defenders. It shouldn’t extend to judges, magistrates, district attorneys or politicians because they have access to other procedures to protect their safety. They are taking up all the resources we need”

Indigenous human rights defender, La Paz

13. Recommendations for the reform of the National Protection Mechanism:

- a) **Enable the structural independence and autonomy of the NPM and increase the number of civil society representatives**, ensuring women, indigenous, Afro-descendant, and LGBTQ+ groups are represented
- b) **Carry out an inclusive consultation with civil society and other beneficiaries to reform the NPM before the 2027 UPR mid-term review**. Ensure it adequately responds to the risk profiles of each category of beneficiary (human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice operators). Publish a clear action plan and monitoring systems to strengthen the NPM
- c) Guarantee that the granting of protection measures under the NPM **takes into account whether the applicant is eligible for other protection mechanisms**, such as the ‘Special Protection Unit for public officials and former public officials’
- d) **Establish specialised units within the NPM** and define tailored strategies to address safety and security challenges for high-risk human rights defenders, including women, LGBTQ+ defenders, and those from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities
- e) **Improve publicly available information about the mechanism and accessibility**. Unless accompanied by NGO staff, lawyers and/or UN agencies, indigenous human rights defenders currently struggle to access the NPM
- f) **Clarify the time period for carrying out risk assessments**, ensuring they take place promptly and safely

Corruption, impunity and weak institutions

14. Honduras currently ranks 154 out of 180 countries on the global corruption perception index.¹⁰ More than 90% of crimes go unpunished and the **impunity rate of crimes against human rights defenders is even higher, at 97%**.¹¹
15. The Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH), was an initiative by the Organization of American States (OAS) aimed at combating corruption

and impunity in Honduras. It was established in 2016 and operated with independence until its mandate failed to be renewed by the Honduran congress who voted against it in 2020.

16. In 2022, a renewed **attempt to set up an international, independent and autonomous mechanism to address corruption and impunity** led to an MoU to be signed by the Honduran government and the UN. These discussions to establish the Comisión Internacional contra la Corrupción e Impunidad en Honduras (**CICIH**) have faced **significant delays** and three years on, it hasn't been set up yet.
17. **Senior government officials** have made public statements undermining and **threatening civil society organisations** and defenders **working on the issue of corruption**. The IACHR raised concerns about several recent incidents of threats and harassment against anti-corruption human rights defenders and called on the government to urgently address this issue.¹²
18. In our surveys, indigenous human rights defenders expressed extremely low levels of confidence in the police, the National Protection Mechanism, the municipal peace courts (El Juzgado de Paz), the Police Investigations Directorate (DPI), and Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (CONADEH), the National Commissioner for Human Rights in Honduras.

“I was persecuted by the police for accompanying a victim of violence. When the victim filed a complaint, she was not taken into account, but when the aggressor filed a complaint, the victim was detained for 24 hours without the right to food. This is why we are afraid. We have witnessed these bad practices”

Indigenous human rights defender, Intibucá

Challenges at the primaries undermines trust in the upcoming presidential elections

19. Presidential elections are due to be held on 30 November 2025, but **the significant challenges faced during the primary elections on 9 March 2025, are beginning to erode the already fragile trust in the electoral process**.
20. During the primaries, in many locations, especially in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa, voting began late (up to 16-hour delay in some locations).¹³ The armed forces and the National Electoral Council (CNE) blamed each other for the disruptions. Suitcases containing electoral equipment were transported on private buses instead of army vehicles, prompting calls for investigations. The late delivery of ballot boxes raised doubts that they could have

been tampered with. The delays impacted voter turnout and have prompted concerns that not enough has been done to prepare adequately for the elections in November.

21. Honduras has in the past invited international election observer missions including from the EU to observe its presidential elections. In late 2024, the National Electoral Council expressed its interest to have an observer mission from the EU. The delay in invite has meant that it remains unclear whether the EU would be able to send a full team or a smaller scale delegation.

22. **Recommendations to ensure free and fair elections in November 2025:**

- a. Carry out an urgent independent **investigation to determine the cause of the logistical challenges experienced in the primary elections**
- b. Ensure **accessible, transparent, and safe presidential elections in November**, with support for **national and international election observer missions**

Violence against women and girls and femicide

23. 1 in 2 women aged 15 or older in Honduras have experienced gender-based violence at some point in their lives.¹⁴ Honduras has **one of the highest rates of femicide** (gender-based killings targeting women and girls) in the world, with **a woman killed on average every 24 hours**.

24. According to government statistics submitted to ECLAC,¹⁵ Honduras has a population of 11 million¹⁶ and the country witnessed 380 victims of femicide in 2023.¹⁷ These figures represent a small fraction of the real numbers as **many cases go unreported** and wrongly classified under other types of crimes.

“Women defenders who help victims of violence to access justice face persecution... The tolerance and complicity of the police authorities with the aggressors doubles the risk for women defenders of women’s rights”

“There is an under-recording of the reality of gender-based violence and murders of indigenous women. The Inter-institutional Commission on Follow-up to Investigations on Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides (CISMVMF) is centralised in Tegucigalpa and does not carry out adequate field work that makes the reality of the interior of the country visible”

“In the state bodies that are supposed to provide protection to women defenders, there is machismo. Complaints are filed but they are ineffective”

Indigenous women human rights defenders, Copan, Intibucá and La Paz

25. 45.9% of all attacks on women defenders registered between 2012 and 2022 were against women defenders of land and territory.¹⁸ **More than 40% of women defenders are from indigenous backgrounds and 13% are Garifuna (Afro-descendants).**¹⁹ The women

defenders who contributed to this briefing reported that a ‘machismo’ culture of misogyny is deeply entrenched in decision-making bodies-both state appointed ones and in indigenous councils and media reportage.

26. **Recommendations to address femicide, GBV and to strengthen the rights of women and girls:**

- a. Ensure the Inter-institutional Commission on Follow-up to Investigations on Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides (**CISMVMF**) **establishes regional hubs, scales up its work in rural areas and has technical capacity to work with indigenous communities**²⁰
- b. Establish cybercrime investigation units at the regional level to address hate speech and other forms of **cyber violence against women and girls**. The resources are currently centralised. There is an urgent need for it to be established at the regional level

Conflict related to land and natural resources

27. The conflict around land and natural resources in Honduras is deeply rooted in historical and legal issues. **Indigenous people, Afro-descendants, artisanal miners and fishers, small holders and campesino (peasant) communities routinely face discrimination, forced evictions and violence.**

28. Many of them work and live on land for which they are still awaiting official deeds or face the issue of ‘double titling’ where multiple owners have been assigned the same lands. They encounter aggression from gangs hired by private companies, backed by government officials, to launch projects like agribusinesses, hydroelectric projects, and extractive ventures without community consent and often ignoring environmental harm.

29. The systemic discrimination they face also impacts their access to justice as these testimonies by indigenous farmers from Lenca and Maya Chortí communities exemplify:

“We don’t have cars, we walk long distances for justice but we have our voices...the river is contaminated, our cattle are dying and there has also been loss of human life. I blame the mayors office and the municipal office who gave the permission to extractives projects”

“CONADEH has been a friend of the landowners. They are protecting the mayors and private landowners. So we have lost trust in them and in the ministry of security”

“Even in the supreme court, judges are at the service of private landowners, disregarding the rights of indigenous groups”

Indigenous human rights defenders, Copan, Intibucá and La Paz

30. Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities generally prefer community land titles that they see as important to ensure collective sustainable land management and to preserve their cultural heritage.
31. The agrarian reforms of the 1960s and 1970s that aimed to redistribute land equally had limited progress and the **1992** Law of Modernisation and Development of the Agricultural Sector (**LMDSA**) proved to be a major setback. The latter reduced the budget and role of the National Agrarian Institute (INA) which was tasked with managing the land redistribution, privatised seed banks and eliminated vital articles for expropriating uncultivated land.²¹ It also permitted the sale of large tracts of land, which were previously held collectively. This led to thousands of acres being transferred from small-scale farmer communities to large agro-industrial companies.
32. The high-profile conflict in **Bajo Aguán** is just one of several ongoing violent territorial conflicts in the country that has its roots in the impact of the 1992 LMDSA law.
33. Honduras has ratified the **ILO Convention 169**, which mandates that indigenous groups have the right to '**Free, Prior and Informed Consent**' (**FPIC**) before any projects are undertaken that could impact their lands and livelihoods. However, these **consultations are infrequent**, and when they do occur, the townhall meetings are carried out as a mere formality. Indigenous communities we work with shared that private companies and government officials treat these meetings as a **checkbox exercise and fail to genuinely consider their perspectives** and the long-term environmental impact of their projects.
34. **Recommendations to address conflict relating to land and natural resources:**
 - a. Ensure the implementation of **ILO convention 169** that protects indigenous peoples' rights to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). Carry out inclusive consultation of indigenous groups prior to the incorporation of the draft national law on FPIC (which was introduced over ten years ago)²²
 - b. Sign and ratify the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the **Escazú agreement**)
 - c. Constructively engage with the **UN binding treaty negotiations** on business and human rights and implement legislation at the national level to hold businesses accountable
 - d. Ensure indigenous groups are able to engage with governance structures by hiring intercultural interpreters and **making legal procedures accessible for communities with low literacy**. Resources should also be directed to improve regional access to justice, as current structures are centralised in Tegucigalpa

Challenges faced by young people

35. **More than half of Honduras' population is aged 25 and under.** Young people face significant challenges in accessing employment, education and participating in decision-making processes.
36. Gangs and organised crime groups intentionally recruit children and young people to exploit the differential age based criminal sentencing policies.²³
37. According to the National Violence Observatory of the National Autonomous University of Honduras, at least 162 children and adolescents were murdered in 2022, of which 63.6% were between 15 and 17 years of age. The IACHR noted in the same year that 34.9% of all violent deaths fell within the 18-29 age category.²⁴
38. Indigenous youth we work with shared that many of them had to drop out of education at secondary school to help their families with agricultural work. Even individuals who have completed their education face challenges in securing entry-level positions, which are infrequently available. Consequently, many resort to seasonal agricultural employment, prompting significant migration to urban areas or abroad in search of opportunities. This movement increases their vulnerability to **forced labour, gender-based violence and human trafficking.**
39. However, many indigenous young people are bringing social change through local level advocacy.

“Previously in the municipality of Santa Elena, the women’s department staff were overseeing the work of the youth office too. After our social audit, and advocacy, they ensured young people are in post to cover the youth office”

“In 4 municipalities, we noticed that the municipal office’s youth funds were being used for issues not related to young people. We called for this to be changed and they were open to our recommendations”

Indigenous human rights defenders, Intibucá and La Paz

40. **Recommendations to strengthen the rights of young people:**
 - a. **Scale up education and employment opportunities** for young people, especially those living in rural areas
 - b. Allow young people in each community to **select the youth office staff** in their respective municipality and **increase transparency** in how municipal budgets are spent
 - c. **Redesign the Currículo Nacional Básico (CNB)** and establish educational programmes to include human rights training

- d. Facilitate **access to technology and education in digital skills** to reduce the digital divide, mainly in rural areas
- e. Establish **accessible and confidential complaint mechanisms** for cases of youth rights violations

Impacts of climate change

- 41. Honduras is **one of the world’s most climate-vulnerable countries** and it has ‘recently experienced the worst droughts, hurricanes and floods in over 40 years.’²⁵ The consequences are disastrous for a country where 44% of the population live in rural areas and agriculture, livestock, forestry and aquaculture account for 35% of employment.²⁶
- 42. In **1998, Hurricane Mitch** destroyed an estimated 70% of the country’s crops and infrastructure, causing more than 10,000 deaths and \$3bn in damage,²⁷ while **Hurricanes Iota and Eta** (hitting within two weeks of one another **in 2020**) directly and indirectly affected more than 40% of the population and 80% of the agricultural sector.²⁸ In **2024, Tropical Storm Sara** also led to widespread devastation of lives and livelihoods.
- 43. The indigenous human rights defenders who co-drafted this report rely entirely on agriculture and farming for their livelihood, producing coffee, maize, beans, vegetables, honey, and engaging in cattle rearing and fish-farming. Most reside in the 'Corridor Seco'-'Dry Corridor', an area particularly vulnerable to climate change which is experiencing longer periods of drought and irregular rainfall leading to floods.
- 44. They reported that **new crop diseases have resulted in the loss of several varieties of native seeds and native bees**. Additionally, **irregular rainfall patterns, decreasing biodiversity, and lowering levels of groundwater have increased food insecurity**.

“Crops are not achieving the fruits they used to; intense rains are destroying our crops. Because they are unpredictable in timings, we can’t prepare for it.”

Indigenous human rights defenders, Copan

- 45. **Community climate monitors and weather stations** established by CDH and other NGOs are helping rural communities to better prepare for the impacts of climate change. They act as early warning systems, guide agricultural decisions and provide valuable data which is fed **into Honduras’ national information system**, the Comisión Permanente de Contingencias de Honduras (COPECO) to inform their nationwide bulletins. Government support for these local level initiatives should be increased.²⁹

46. Communities are also contending with **increased levels of water pollution** from rising sea levels, flooding, agricultural runoff, illegal open pit mining and high levels of deforestation.

“The little water we have is contaminated”

“The hotels and restaurants in the tourist town of Copan have access to water constantly. But in the rural areas, there isn’t enough water”

Indigenous human rights defenders, Intibucá and Copan

47. Honduras has witnessed a sharp increase in **wildfires** over the past decade caused by rising temperatures, drought and unregulated **slash-and-burn agricultural techniques**. The Forest Conservation Institute of Honduras documented **3,170 fires that devastated 296,789 hectares in 2024**,³⁰ and a fire caused significant damage to La Tigra National Park (known locally as the ‘lungs of Tegucigalpa’) and surrounding areas in March 2024.

“In Copan Ruinas, we face threats if we try to hold the local governments to account. It was very difficult for us to raise our voice against deforestation. [...] From our experience, it could cost your life to challenge power”

“The agricultural practices of slash-and-burn should be controlled as it kills the small trees near our farms and impacts the water levels further. The mayor said those who cut down trees would be sanctioned but implementation of this hasn’t been strong. Twice a year slash-and-burn is taking place”

Indigenous human rights defenders, Copan

48. There are currently three fundamental legal instruments which address the impacts of climate change in Honduras: the Law on Climate Change (Decree no. 297-2013), the National Climate Change Strategy, and the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan.³¹ However, they are **not being effectively implemented across the country and need updating**. The resources assigned to implement these plans are inadequate and policy coherence and coordination between state bodies needs to be strengthened. For example, municipal adaptation plans are not properly linked with the national adaptation plan, undermining the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) objectives.

49. In its 2021 NDC, Honduras committed to reducing net emissions by 16% by 2030 and reforesting 1.3 million hectares of forest.³² There must be greater ambition and **clear actionable strategies** in the new NDC to continue **reversing deforestation, strengthen climate mitigation efforts** in alignment with the global stocktake and **reduce global greenhouse emissions** under the Paris Agreement (2015). It is essential **civil society is consulted** in the formulation and assessment of progress against NDC objectives and targets.

50. **Loss and damage (both economic and non-economic) should be incorporated into the updated NDC** beyond a focus on climate mitigation and adaptation measures. This is essential for a more comprehensive response to the climate crisis. This **should include loss and damage from both rapid onset climate events and slow-onset events**, such as rising sea levels and land degradation.

51. **Due to the absence of a comprehensive system for documenting loss and damage, civil society has taken on the role of monitoring and evidencing local experiences.**³³ It is critical that the state consults and includes them in the decision-making of climate policies given their direct experience of the context and their technical capacity.

52. **Recommendations to address the climate crisis:**

- a) Promote the **recovery and use of native seeds** and encourage the adoption of sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices, including by providing **incentives to move away from monoculture and slash-and-burn methods** of clearing land
- b) Ensure the **implementation of the updated 2025 NDC includes broad participation from civil society**
- c) Ensure there is a **comprehensive system of documenting loss and damage and embed loss and damage (economic and non-economic)** from both rapid onset and slow-onset climate events **in the updated NDC**
- d) Establish a **comprehensive monitoring, follow-up and evaluation mechanism** for the NDC
- e) Action the recommendation from the UN SR³⁴ who called for a **revision of Decree No. 297-2013 (the Law on Climate Change) to reflect the climate crisis** Honduras is facing and to establish **sanctions or penalties** for those who contravene these regulations
- f) **Enforce laws and penalties** for those who destroy forests and pollute natural resources

Conclusion

In the evidence gathering that led to this submission, we reviewed recommendations that were made to Honduras in the last UPR. While it was encouraging to see that UN member states had made recommendations on all the themes this report addresses, we noted that Honduras had made very little progress on them.

The recommendations in this report build on the gaps in implementation that we identified and offer concrete ideas on how UN member state recommendations can be strengthened.

We urge member states to continue to raise these issues, consider our recommendations which were jointly drafted by indigenous defenders, and ensure their recommendations are specific, with clear targets and timeframes.

Annex 1, Summary of recommendations

53. Reform the National Protection Mechanism:

- a. **Enable the structural independence and autonomy of the NPM and increase the number of civil society representatives**, ensuring women, indigenous, Afro-descendant, and LGBTQ+ groups are represented
- b. **Carry out an inclusive consultation with civil society and other beneficiaries to reform the NPM before the 2027 UPR mid-term review**. Ensure it adequately responds to the risk profiles of each category of beneficiary (human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice operators). Publish a clear action plan and monitoring systems to strengthen the NPM
- c. Guarantee that the granting of protection measures under the NPM **takes into account whether the applicant is eligible for other protection mechanisms**, such as the Special Protection Unit for public officials and former public officials
- d. **Establish specialised units within the NPM** and define tailored strategies to address safety and security challenges for high-risk human rights defenders, including women, LGBTQ+ defenders, and those from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities
- e. **Improve publicly available information about the mechanism and accessibility**. Unless accompanied by NGO staff, lawyers and/or UN agencies, indigenous human rights defenders currently struggle to access the NPM
- f. **Clarify the time period for carrying out risk assessments**, ensuring they take place promptly and safely

54. Ensure free and fair elections in November 2025:

- a. Carry out an urgent independent **investigation to determine the cause of the logistical challenges experienced in the primary elections**
- b. Ensure **accessible, transparent, and safe presidential elections in November**, with support for **national and international election observer missions**

55. End femicide and strengthen the rights of women and girls:

- a. Ensure the Inter-institutional Commission on Follow-up to Investigations on Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides (**CISMVMF**) **establishes regional hubs, scales up its work in rural areas and has technical capacity to work with indigenous communities**¹
- b. Establish cybercrime investigation units at the regional level to address hate speech and other forms of **cyber violence against women and girls**. The resources are currently centralised. There is an urgent need for it to be established at the regional level

56. Prevent and resolve conflict relating to land and natural resources:

- a. Ensure the implementation of **ILO convention 169** that protects indigenous peoples' rights to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). Carry out inclusive

consultation of indigenous groups prior to the incorporation of the draft national law on FPIC (which was introduced over ten years ago)³⁵

- b. Sign and ratify the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the **Escazú agreement**)
- c. Constructively engage with the UN binding treaty negotiations on business and human rights and implement legislation at the national level to hold businesses accountable
- d. Ensure indigenous groups are able to engage with governance structures by hiring intercultural interpreters and making legal procedures accessible for communities with low literacy. Resources should also be directed to improve regional access to justice, as current structures are centralised in Tegucigalpa

57. Strengthen the rights of young people

- a. **Scale up education and employment opportunities** for young people, especially those living in rural areas
- b. Allow young people in each community to **select the youth office staff** in their respective municipality and **increase transparency** in how municipal budgets are spent
- c. **Redesign the Currículo Nacional Básico (CNB)** and establish educational programmes to include human rights training
- d. Facilitate **access to technology and education in digital skills** to reduce the digital divide, mainly in rural areas
- e. Establish **accessible and confidential complaint mechanisms** for cases of youth rights violations

58. Address the climate crisis:

- a. Promote the **recovery and use of native seeds** and encourage the adoption of sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices, including by providing **incentives to move away from monoculture and slash-and-burn methods** of clearing land
- b. Ensure the **implementation of the updated 2025 NDC includes broad participation from civil society**
- c. Ensure there is a **comprehensive system of documenting loss and damage and embed loss and damage (economic and non-economic)** from both rapid onset climate events and slow-onset events **in the updated NDC**
- d. Establish a **comprehensive monitoring, follow-up and evaluation mechanism** for the NDC
- e. Action the recommendation from the UN SR³⁶ who called for a **revision of Decree No. 297-2013 (the Law on Climate Change) to reflect the climate crisis** Honduras is facing and to establish **sanctions or penalties** for those who contravene these regulations
- f. **Enforce laws and penalties** for those who destroy forests and pollute natural resources

Annex 2 Information about submitting organisations

1. **Christian Aid** is the official relief, development and advocacy agency of 41 sponsoring churches in the UK and Ireland. Christian Aid has worked in Honduras since 1997 helping communities address humanitarian and peacebuilding issues.
2. **Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM)** is the social action arm of the Mennonite Church in Honduras. It works to help vulnerable communities prepare to face storms by implementing early warning systems and community action plans. It also helps villages to organise small-scale 'safety-net' projects such as building bridges.
3. **Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH)** works with indigenous communities to improve women's access to health services and to tackle gender-based violence. OCDIH is also working on climate monitoring and climate change adaptation with small farmers in western Honduras, creating alliances with national platforms and government institutions.
4. **Centro de Desarrollo Humano (CDH)** is a Honduran civil society organisation dedicated to the promotion of human rights and the advancement of alternative human development, with an emphasis on youth, women and indigenous peoples, with a social movement perspective.

Endnotes

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- ¹ The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment has been codified in the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 in 2021 and General Assembly resolution 76/300 in 2022
 - ² Paragraphs 50 and 51, Situation of human rights in Honduras - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/58/23
 - ³ The full title of the *National Protection Mechanism (NPM)* is the *National Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Public Communicators, and Justice Operators*. In Spanish, it is the *El Mecanismo Nacional de Protección para Defensores y Defensoras de Derechos Humanos, Periodistas, Comunicadores Sociales y Operadores de Justicia (SNP)*.
 - ⁴ This shows a lack of progress on recommendations on this issue that were made to Honduras in 2020. For instance, Germany recommended it 'Involve civil society organisations in the decision-making processes of the national protection mechanism.'
 - ⁵ OACNUDH. (February 21, 2025). <https://oacnudh.hn/oacnudh-i-la-ley-de-proteccion-para-las-y-los-defensores-de-derechos-humanos-periodistas-comunicadores-sociales-y-operadores-de-justicia/>
 - ⁶ OACNUDH. (2022). Diagnóstico y plan de fortalecimiento del sistema nacional de protección para las y los defensores de derechos humanos, periodistas, comunicadores sociales y operadores de justicia en Honduras. <https://oacnudh.hn/multimedia/diagnostico/>
 - ⁷ Ibid.
 - ⁸ CESPAD received the data about the budget presented in the table above from the Office of Transparency and Access to Public Information of the Secretary Human Rights in 2024
 - ⁹ Contracorriente. (April 11, 2024). Los «VIP» del Sistema Nacional de Protección. Retrieved from <https://contracorriente.red/2024/04/11/los-vip-del-sistema-nacional-de-proteccion/>
 - ¹⁰ Transparencia Internacional, 2024, www.transparency.org/en/countries/honduras
 - ¹¹ Informe del Relator Especial sobre la independencia de los magistrados y abogados. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers. A/HRC/44/47/Add.2, June 2, 2020
 - ¹² Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.(March 24, 2024), [Situación de derechos humanos en Honduras](#),
 - ¹³ [Las elecciones primarias en Honduras quedan marcadas por denuncias de irregularidades y retrasos | CNN](#), Retrieved from CNN en Español. March 10, 2025.

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- ¹⁴ National Statistics Institute. (2023). *First National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls Aged 15 and Older*, [Informe principal ENESVM 8Nov2023](#)
- ¹⁵ [Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (GEO) of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- ¹⁶ [National Socio-Demographic Profile: Honduras - CEPALSTAT Statistic Database and Publications](#)
- ¹⁷ ECLAC, [Honduras - Country profile | Gender Equality Observatory](#)
- ¹⁸ Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders. (2023). *Data That Hurt Us, Networks That Save Us - 10+ Years of Attacks against Women Human Rights Defenders in Mesoamerica (2012-2023)*. IM-INFORMEEJECUTIVO24-INGweb.pdf, page 25.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ In the previous UPR 2020, Ireland recommended Honduras ‘support the work of the Inter-institutional Commission on Follow-up to Investigations on Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides’ but we have seen limited progress to date.
- ²¹ PBI Honduras, 2020. CNTC: “We can’t sit on our hands waiting for agrarian laws to help us”. [Accessed 26 Mar. 2025].
- ²² [Statement of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of indigenous peoples, at the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council | OHCHR](#)
- ²³ Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Northern Central America: Organized Crime and the Rights of Children, Adolescents and Young People: Current Challenges and State Actions, 2023 [NorteCentroamerica_NNAJ_EN](#)
- ²⁴ Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.(March 24, 2024), [Situación de derechos humanos en Honduras](#)
- ²⁵ Fry, Ian. "Visit to Honduras - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change." A/HRC/56/46/ADD.1, United Nations Human Rights Council, 30 July 2024. Available at: [OHCHR](#)
- ²⁶ ‘Política de Estado del Sector Agroalimentario de Honduras 2023-2024’, December 2023. Available at: [PESAH-2023-2043.pdf](#)
- ²⁷ Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank. Available at: [Honduras - Vulnerability | Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#).
- ²⁸ Pereira, Elena, ‘Case Study: Effects of Hurricanes Eta and Iota’, UNFCCC, 29 April 2023. Available at: [Presentación de PowerPoint](#)
- ²⁹ Christian Aid Ireland, ‘Overcoming drought and flooding in Honduras’ Dry Corridor’, 4 December 2023. Available at: [Overcoming drought and flooding in Honduras' Dry Corridor - Christian Aid Ireland](#)
- ³⁰ The Forest Conservation Institute of Honduras, 2024. Available at: [Forest Fires - SIGMOF](#)
- ³¹ Climate Change Laws of the World (hosted by the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment), Honduras. Available at: [Law and Policy Search - Climate Change Laws of the World](#)
- ³² Honduras first Nationally Determined Contributions (updated submission), 19 May 2021. Available at: [Nationally Determined Contributions Registry | UNFCCC](#)
- ³³ CDH and Asociación Centroamericana Centro Humboldt (ACCH), shadow report assessing the progress of the current NDC presented at COP29, 2024.
- ³⁴ Fry, Ian. "Visit to Honduras - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change." A/HRC/56/46/ADD.1, United Nations Human Rights Council, 30 July 2024. Available at: [OHCHR](#)
- ³⁵ [Statement of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of indigenous peoples, at the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council | OHCHR](#)
- ³⁶ Fry, Ian. "Visit to Honduras - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change." A/HRC/56/46/ADD.1, United Nations Human Rights Council, 30 July 2024. Available at: [OHCHR](#)