



## **PBI: Defending human rights is crucial in the present context of Honduras**

December 5th, 2017

Peace Brigades International (PBI) is observing with serious concern the situation in Honduras in the days following the general elections that took place on November 26th, 2017. Since then, both national and international civil society organizations have expressed their concern surrounding the tense climate generated due to the lack of definitive presidential results<sup>1</sup>.

Diverse sectors of the Honduran population have begun to protest across the entire country to demand a transparent electoral process with credible results. On the other hand, there have been reports of looting and damage to private property.

On Friday December 1st, the Honduran government declared a curfew as well as the suspension of certain constitutional rights for 10 days. These restrictions, in accordance with the American Convention on Human Rights, should be utilized in extreme situations according to the principle of proportionality, and in no case should they legitimize the violation of the right to life and personal integrity, rights that cannot be touched nor suspended<sup>2</sup>.

PBI has received with extreme concern reports of serious acts of violence committed by state security forces, violating the human rights of the population. In a recent statement made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Honduras, the international organizations referred to 11 deaths and at least 15 people injured in recent protests<sup>3</sup>.

Human Rights Defenders are particularly exposed to risks and threats. In this context, Human Rights Defenders and organizations have been carrying out their work, which includes documentation of cases, legal representation, and observation, among other things. The current state of emergency restricts their right to document and disseminate information<sup>4</sup>, and thus closes a fundamental part of their work space.

We hereby make an urgent call to the international community to call on the Honduran government to comply with their obligation to guarantee the protection, promotion, and respect of human rights and fundamental liberties. Additionally, we emphasize how important it is for the Honduran government to comply with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, to recognize and explicitly facilitate the tasks carried out by Human Rights Defenders of monitoring, standardization, and denunciations in the current context.

Since 1981, PBI has provided international accompaniment to individuals, organizations, and communities that promote and defend human rights. This protective accompaniment combines physical presence with advocacy work at the international and national levels. Following the request of civil society organizations, PBI has had a permanent project in the country since 2013. As a part of our work, we maintain constant communication with Human Rights Defenders, authorities, international organisations, and the diplomatic corps, allowing us to obtain first hand information about the human rights situation in the country.

---

<sup>1</sup> Espacio ACI. Espacio ACI supports civil society voices that demand transparency, truth, and diligence in the results of the Honduran general elections. (Spanish only). November 29th, 2017. Available at: <http://www.weeffect.org/es/comunicado-espacio-aci-respalda-el-llamado-de-la-sociedad-civil-en-honduras/>

<sup>2</sup> Articles 4, 5 and 27 of the American Convention on Human Rights.

<sup>3</sup> IACHR/OHCHR. IACHR and OHCHR Express Concern over Post-Election Violence in Honduras. December 3rd, 2017. Available at: [https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media\\_center/PReleases/2017/197.asp](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2017/197.asp)

<sup>4</sup> Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression of the Organization of American States (OAS)