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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
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High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Situation of human rights in Honduras

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, **

Summary

The present report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights describes the human rights situation in Honduras from 1 January to 31 December 2025. The report highlights key areas of progress and challenges in the promotion and protection of human rights and includes recommendations to the State.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

** The summary of the report is being circulated in all official languages. The report itself, which is annexed to the summary, is being circulated in the language of submission and English only.



Annex

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Honduras

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to article V (4) of the agreement signed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Government of Honduras on 4 May 2015. The report and the analysis contained herein are based on information gathered by OHCHR in the country and information provided by State authorities, civil society and victims.
2. The Office conducted 82 field missions, including 19 visits to places of deprivation of liberty. It implemented 160 technical assistance and strengthening measures for State institutions, civil society organizations and victims, organized 14 workshops and training sessions and monitored 30 judicial proceedings. It also conducted 25 communication campaigns to promote human rights.
3. The Office was affected by financial constraints resulting from the liquidity situation in relation to the regular budget and the discontinuation of funding by some donors.
4. During the period covered by this report, little progress was made on important measures for the protection of human rights, such as the implementation of Decree No. 18-2024 on the protection of forest reserves affected by environmental damage, the establishment of the truth commission of Bajo Aguán, the amendment of the Environment Act and the adoption of the law on compliance with international obligations in respect of victims of the implementation of the national security doctrine (1980–1993).

II. General context

5. The human rights situation in Honduras was marked, primarily, by the holding of general elections, the first in four decades to take place under a state of emergency, which was declared in December 2022. There continued to be violations of and undue restrictions on human rights, including due process safeguards and the freedoms of expression, assembly, association and movement. There were also instances of polarized discourse in the media and on social media and of electoral violence, including threats and smear campaigns against women running for or in office. In addition, OHCHR documented the violent deaths of three candidates running for mayoral and municipal seats and one congressional candidate in the departments of Atlántida, Colón and Yoro.
6. The general elections of 30 November took place against a backdrop of partisan tensions, but there were no reports of widespread violence.
7. During the campaign, electoral bodies were attacked by various actors who questioned the credibility and legitimacy of their actions. The partisan composition of the National Electoral Council and the Electoral Court, the late allocation of resources to the Electoral Court and the Financing, Transparency and Oversight Unit and the action taken by the justice system against members of the National Electoral Council and judges on the Electoral Court undermined the normal conduct of the electoral process.
8. Official data indicate that the homicide rate declined by 10.24% from the previous year.¹ According to the Observatory on Violence of the National Autonomous University of Honduras, during that period, young people between 15 and 29 years of age were the most vulnerable, and 70.8% of homicides continued to be committed with firearms, revealing the limited control over their possession. The Observatory also reports that there were 225 violent

¹ See <https://www.sepol.hn/artisistem/images/sepol-images/files/Estadistica%20Cierre%202025.xlsx.pdf>.

deaths of women in the period until October. Red Lésbica Catrachas² documented 35 deaths of LGBTQI+ persons, and Observatorio Kai³ reports that there were 40. As Honduras continues to have one of the highest rates of femicide in the region, efforts to end femicide must not stop.⁴

9. On 15 June, the Government of Honduras and the United Nations agreed to again renew the memorandum of understanding on the establishment of an international commission against corruption and impunity in Honduras, but the commission was not established in 2025.

III. Rule of law and accountability

A. Public safety and state of emergency

10. Since its introduction in December 2022, the state of emergency has been extended 24 times, and its scope has been expanded to cover 76% of the country's territory. None of the eight executive decrees adopted in 2025 to extend the state of emergency were approved by the National Congress.

11. The state of emergency, viewed by the authorities as the key strategy for fighting crime, has lost its exceptional and temporary nature. The suspension of rights and guarantees must be in line with the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality established under international human rights law.⁵ Furthermore, no causal link seems to exist with the decline in violence and crime rates.

12. OHCHR documented human rights violations affecting 24 people, including three women. These include eight cases of enforced disappearance, five cases of torture and ill-treatment, three extrajudicial executions, two deaths in custody and six cases of arbitrary detention, all attributable to military and police forces such as the Police Directorate for Combating Gangs and Organized Crime and the Public Order Military Police. The violations were reportedly committed during raids and warrantless arrests carried out on the basis of the discretion afforded under the state of emergency. In at least 13 documented cases in Choluteca, Francisco Morazán, Intibucá, Olancho, San Pedro Sula and Yoro, the violations were reportedly committed by military and police forces with the aim of obtaining information about alleged gang membership or securing confessions about the commission of offences, including those related to drug possession, weapons and extortion.

13. The Office expresses its concern about the alleged involvement of members of the security forces in eight cases of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial execution in the context of disputes between criminal groups over territory. Cases were documented in the Chamelecón and Rivera Hernández areas of San Pedro Sula.

14. The measures implemented under the state of emergency have had a negative impact on, primarily, people living in neighbourhoods that have high levels of poverty and social exclusion and have been identified by the authorities as gang territory. OHCHR has documented that the victims of the human rights violations in the 24 cases mentioned above are mostly young men between 15 and 30 years of age, some of whom have criminal records. The population in these areas is subjected both to the presence of criminal groups and to constant harassment by the security forces through arbitrary searches, accusations, insults and physical attacks.

15. Under the state of emergency and in the absence of a policy to reduce violence and crime, the authorities have prioritized the prosecution of small-scale trafficking,⁶

² See <https://www.catrachas.org/sistemas>.

³ See <https://reportarsinmiedo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/12VO-Boletin-KAI.pdf>.

⁴ See <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/7e3bbb7e-84a3-4458-a724-eb45f7a1dd5b/content>.

⁵ *A/HRC/52/24*, para. 10.

⁶ The Office defines small-scale trafficking as the possession and distribution of small quantities of drugs.

overburdening the criminal justice and prison systems. Between 1 January and 1 November 2025, the police made a total of 15,953 arrests, of which 13,059 were related to drug trafficking and 377 to extortion.⁷ OHCHR received allegations concerning some of these cases, which lacked thorough investigations and were marred by issues relating to the handling of the chain of custody, insufficient evidence to properly substantiate the charges and restrictions on the right to an adequate defence.

16. The Office noted with concern the presence in various departments of criminal organizations, including transnational ones, and the disputes among them for the control of territory. The actions of such organizations seriously undermine the enjoyment of human rights, especially by groups in situations of vulnerability. OHCHR has documented human rights abuses resulting from the forced displacement of persons in at least four campesino cooperatives (one in Aguán and three in Choloma), the threat of dispossession with respect to Garifuna lands in Triunfo de la Cruz, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and unauthorized occupation of Indigenous Peoples' territories in Gracias a Dios and the forced recruitment attributed to gangs in Cortés.

17. In connection with the electoral process, OHCHR observed the presence of military personnel carrying high-calibre weapons. OHCHR also noted the absence of clear protocols for coordination between the armed forces and the police in maintaining order during the elections.

B. Prison system

18. The National Penitentiary System remained in a state of emergency and under military administration, and no plan was put forward for a gradual handover to civilian authorities, as stipulated in the decree instituting the state of emergency.⁸

19. In May, the National Prison Institute began implementing a plan for the classification of prisons and transferring more than 7,000 persons deprived of liberty to different prisons. The Office recognizes the importance of adopting a classification system for the prison population. However, it regrets that the transfers were carried out without planning and without preparing the prisons to receive the persons being transferred, on a mass scale and with no individual assessment of the persons' legal, social or family situation, physical or mental state or rehabilitation needs. Furthermore, they were carried out without prior notification to the judges or to the persons deprived of liberty or their legal representatives or family members, on the grounds of State security.

20. Following the transfers, OHCHR documented violations of the right to physical and mental integrity of the persons transferred, the absence of decent conditions of detention and delays in and the rescheduling of court hearings as a result of the transfers. It also recorded the deaths, in the prisons in Ilama and Támara, of two men deprived of liberty with chronic health conditions due to a lack of timely medical care and the suspension of their treatment.

21. The failure to transfer administrative files along with the persons deprived of liberty prevented the individuals from appearing at hearings and disrupted the monitoring of their cases, thus affecting due process and the judicial protection of the persons deprived of liberty.

22. Following the transfers, the Office conducted 11 prison visits, during which it observed poor conditions caused by overcrowding, including prolonged deprivation of food, water and proper medical care, and limited sanitation, hygiene, ventilation and natural light. It also documented the inability of detainees to adequately communicate with their families and lawyers, the use of collective punishment, the suspension of visits and prolonged isolation. The Office promptly conveyed its concerns to the authorities,⁹ including those tied to the violations of the rights of the persons deprived of liberty. It also recalled that, beyond

⁷ Ministry of Security, official letter No. 2177-2025.

⁸ See <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/PCM-28-2023.pdf>.

⁹ See <https://oacnudh.hn/oacnudh-expresa-su-preocupacion-ante-los-traslados-masivos-de-personas-privadas-de-libertad/>.

the legitimate restriction of their liberty, such persons must in no case be subjected to punitive, discriminatory or degrading treatment, even when held in maximum security.

23. The Office welcomes the fact that, in September, the new officials on the prison system's Intervention Commission began implementing some of the Office's recommendations for the protection of the rights of persons deprived of liberty. These include prioritizing factors such as local ties, health conditions and participation in rehabilitation programmes when relocating persons deprived of liberty. Individualized assessments have begun of each person deprived of liberty, and progress has been made in the design and development of a comprehensive protocol for the receipt and handling of complaints, reports and requests from the prison population.

24. In the context of the mass transfers, prison authorities have made public accusations and conducted smear campaigns against the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights and the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the national preventive mechanism, jeopardizing their work and weakening their role of protecting human rights.

C. Access to justice

25. There continue to be serious shortcomings in the investigation and criminal prosecution of cases involving human rights violations and abuses. Investigations into some of these cases continue to be conducted by different special prosecutors' offices, with no effective coordination among them. This has resulted in unjustified delays in the filing of charges, incomplete investigations, revictimization and impunity for those responsible. For example, in the case of the disappearance in 2020 of five persons from the Garifuna community in Triunfo de la Cruz, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life filed charges of terrorist association and other offences against 16 suspects from a criminal group in January 2025. At the same time, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights is continuing its investigation into whether State actors were responsible.

26. The Office has documented 18 cases of alleged enforced disappearance since the state of emergency began, eight of which occurred in 2025. It is worrying that none of the cases have gone to court and the whereabouts of the victims have not been ascertained, despite the reports that have been filed. The lack of a separate criminal offense and a specific protocol for investigations and searches seriously impedes progress in these cases. Furthermore, the continued failure to apply the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) or to use appropriate scientific evidence in cases of torture and ill-treatment hinders progress in investigations.

27. In February, the Supreme Court of Justice upheld the 30-year prison sentence handed down against one of the perpetrators in the killing of environmental defender Berta Cáceres. Under the auspices of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, an interdisciplinary group of independent experts was established to provide advice on the investigation into the instigators and on reparation for the victims in the case. With regard to the death of activist Juan López, the Office noted that progress had been made with the opening of the trial in September against three persons accused of having carried out the killing. However, there continues to be a lack of progress in the conduct of a thorough investigation into the identity and responsibility of the instigators.

28. OHCHR highlights a decision handed down by the local court of Trujillo in August, in which it dismissed a case against five Garifuna defenders relating to recognition of the right to ancestral territory. However, legal proceedings are ongoing in which Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities are being criminalized for defending their ancestral territories. The Office has documented at least four cases where proceedings for unauthorized occupation and forced displacement have been brought against communities in such contexts.¹⁰

¹⁰ These cases involve the Lenca Indigenous Councils of Potrerillos, Cacao, and Nueva Esperanza and the Garifuna community of Crawfish Rock.

29. In 2025, with a view to applying a gender-sensitive approach to access to justice, the judiciary launched its justice and gender observatory, and a mandatory module on the gender perspective was rolled out as a part of the judicial training programme, with technical assistance from OHCHR. However, in at least two judicial proceedings, the Office has noted that, in cases of violence against women, gender-based stereotypes and prejudices persist on the part of justice officials at different levels, including, for example, in the investigation of potential femicides or in the consideration of offences committed by women. In addition, the failure to implement a legal procedure for the recognition of gender identity and name changes is a source of concern.

30. The filing of charges against three retired high-ranking military officers for the death of Isy Obed during the 2009 coup d'état is a significant step towards accountability. However, the State still has a historical debt in terms of investigating, prosecuting and providing reparation for the serious human rights violations committed during the 1980s, the 2009 coup d'état and the 2017 post-election crisis.

IV. Civic space and citizen participation

A. Human rights defenders

31. Human rights defenders continue to be victims of killings, threats, harassment, smear campaigns and criminalization by State and non-State actors. Furthermore, there continue to be high levels of impunity. In 2025, the Office documented 17 violent deaths, including that of one woman, in the departments of Colón, Copán, Olancho and Comayagua: 13 land defenders and family members, two journalists, and one environmental defender and his son. This figure represents a significant increase compared to 2024, when only seven violent deaths were documented.

32. Environmental defenders who exercise their legitimate right of access to land or who oppose extractive projects in ancestral territories continue to face risks. On 26 February, in Comayagua, a defender and his son were beheaded while they were documenting illegal logging with the aim of filing a report with the authorities. There has been no substantial progress in the investigation by the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life.

33. Human rights defenders continue to receive death threats from criminal groups and economic actors because of their work defending territory and the environment. The Office is aware that in Bajo Aguán and in Garifuna communities, at least nine leaders face constant threats and risks to their lives because of their work.

34. The smear campaigns against and efforts to defame and stigmatize human rights defenders, driven by economic actors and organized crime, increase the defenders' exposure to serious attacks and murder. OHCHR noted that these incidents tend to increase when civil society organizations make progress in their pursuit of justice. The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras has been the target of a systematic campaign on digital media to delegitimize its work in the Berta Cáceres case. Similarly, groups involved in the defence of the Montaña de Botaderos National Park and the Juan López case have been subjected to harassment and coordinated smear campaigns.

35. The criminalization of human rights advocacy continues to be used as a tool for deterrence. The use of offences such as unauthorized occupation or forced displacement, interpreted broadly, to prosecute persons engaging in advocacy violates the principle of legality and the right to due process. OHCHR documented at least five cases against environmental defenders and Garifuna leaders, which, although they ended in dismissals, constitute acts of hostility and intimidation against those who defend human rights.

36. Although there have been judicial decisions ordering dismissals or alternative measures, human rights defenders still face the risk of arrest by security forces. OHCHR has documented nine cases (including three involving women) in which human rights defenders were arrested at police checkpoints because of shortcomings in the updating of the NACMIS computerized case registration and monitoring system, which contains information about

court proceedings against individuals. The failure to update the system highlights structural weaknesses in the coordination between the institutions of the justice system and law enforcement agencies.

B. National Protection System

37. Ten years after its establishment, the National System for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials continues to face significant challenges in terms of prevention and the effective protection of human rights defenders and journalists. During the period addressed in the present report, one person covered by the System was killed, bringing the total to 12 since the System was established, according to official figures.¹¹

38. The insufficient coordination among the actors involved in the National Protection System, particularly the Ministry of Security, the Public Prosecution Service and the Directorate General of the Protection System, limits the System's capacity to act in an effective and timely manner. In addition, the limited local presence of the Directorate General further delays interventions.

39. Although the regulatory framework provides for the participation of persons benefiting from measures in the different settings where those measures are defined, their effective participation remains limited. The Office has noted that these persons often do not have sufficient information about the scope and duration of the protection measures granted or do not receive timely information about changes in the implementation of the measures. The ineffectiveness of the participation mechanisms provided for under the Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials and the regulations thereto is a source of concern. The Office also received reports that the process for challenging decisions on protection measures was ineffective and slow.

40. The allegations that sensitive information regarding the protection measures for Berta Cáceres' family members has been leaked, creating additional risks for the family members, are also worrying.¹² These acts must be investigated immediately. Although complaints have been filed, no progress has been made in the investigation or punishment of those responsible, but the State has taken institutional measures to make the handling of files and the archiving of information more secure.

C. Freedom of expression and opinion

41. In 2025, there continued to be cases where the work of journalists was obstructed, access to official information was limited and community media were not legally recognized.

42. OHCHR recorded repeated instances where members of the security forces and political groups restricted coverage by journalists in connection with demonstrations, the electoral process and investigations into citizen complaints, including by preventing them from covering municipal council meetings. In addition, it also recorded the failure of public institutions to provide a timely response to requests made for access to information through official portals.

43. The Office notes that, in the departments of Atlántida, Colón, Copán, Gracias a Dios and Yoro, journalists work in a hostile environment marked by threats from local State and non-State actors, polarization and a lack of State protection. This has led journalists and communicators to self-censor and avoid certain topics for fear of reprisals. This reportedly led to the displacement of two journalists, one from Puerto Lempira and the other from Tocoa.

¹¹ Ministry of Human Rights, official letter No. SEDH-1624-2025 of 9 December 2025.

¹² See <https://copinh.org/2025/06/comunicado-9-2025-filtran-informacion-sobre-medidas-de-proteccion-de-copinh-y-familia-de-berta-caceres/>.

44. Community media face structural obstacles, including a lack of legal recognition, restrictions on obtaining public funding and regulatory requirements designed for corporate media.

45. OHCHR received information about private communications sent by representatives of State institutions, including the armed forces and the Ministry of Security, to media outlets and journalists, requesting the disclosure of their sources of information.

46. The armed forces used their institutional media to label communicators who published information of public interest about the institution as “hitmen targeting the truth”.¹³ These statements, given their institutional origin and wide visibility, can have a chilling effect on journalism, weaken democratic debate and, when combined with other factors, can lead to stigma and, furthermore, create an environment not conducive to the exercise of the right to freedom of expression.

V. Economic, social and cultural rights and right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

A. Poverty and inequality

47. Despite the decline in recent years, levels of poverty, extreme poverty and inequality remain high in the country. Official data indicate that in 2024, 62.9% of households lived in poverty and 40.1% in extreme poverty.¹⁴ Honduras is in the medium human development category and, with its human development index value of 0.645, ranks 139th out of 193 countries.¹⁵

B. Right to health

48. In 2025, the budget of the Ministry of Health increased by 0.5%,¹⁶ with the total increase since 2022 amounting to 32%. In addition, the Government announced the construction of eight hospitals. However, the system continues to face challenges in terms of prioritization and implementation, with a total of 63.76%¹⁷ of the general budget having been executed by the third quarter of 2025. At the same time, the health emergency was extended,¹⁸ which allowed for the direct procurement of services, supplies, equipment and medicines. These factors affect essential components of the right to health, such as availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality, and also undermine the obligation to progressively realize the right and use the maximum available resources.

49. The Office noted the serious health conditions affecting Miskito divers as a result of occupational accidents related to dive fishing, which they had engaged in for years without measures to prevent and protect them from occupational hazards and because of which they had developed disabilities. The State has not taken sufficient measures to strengthen the health system in La Mosquitia or to ensure comprehensive healthcare for the persons affected. It has also not adopted effective accident prevention measures or robust mechanisms for the regulation, supervision and oversight of fishing companies, despite this being one of the reparation measures ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in *Miskito Divers (Lemeth Morris et al.) v. Honduras*.¹⁹

¹³ *FF.AA. Digital*, 26 May 2025, issue no. 119-2025.

¹⁴ See <https://ine.gob.hn/2024/11/28/reduccion-de-la-pobreza-y-el-desempleo/>.

¹⁵ See <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/HND>.

¹⁶ See https://www.sefin.gob.hn/wp-content/uploads/2025/presupuesto/03-trim/USB/index_html_files/Evaluacion060.pdf, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁸ Executive Decree No. 42-2024.

¹⁹ The State also failed to make progress in implementing the other 16 reparation measures ordered by the Court. See https://corteidh.or.cr/docs/supervisiones/buzos_miskitos_30_04_24.pdf.

C. Right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

50. The Office notes that there have been significant gains under the policies against deforestation, according to data from the Institute for Forest Conservation,²⁰ and progress has also been made in reviewing and reforming the environmental licensing system, with technical assistance from OHCHR. However, there is still a need to adjust the regulatory framework so that it fully guarantees the right of Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans to free, prior and informed consultation, as well as their rights to participation, access to information and environmental justice in environmental licensing processes.

51. The Office notes with concern the submission in May to the National Congress of a draft bill, now in its third reading, intended to simplify the environmental licensing process. If adopted, the automatic expiration of deadlines would result in the granting of licenses for the exploitation of natural resources and infrastructure development without verification of compliance with legal requirements, which could have a serious impact on the environment and the enjoyment by persons living in surrounding areas of their human rights and undermine the effectiveness of oversight activities.

D. Extractive projects and their impact on the enjoyment of human rights

52. There is often no effective monitoring of mining projects after the granting of a concession, which has a negative impact on the human rights of local communities, particularly Indigenous communities. The Office notes persistent shortcomings in processes relating to public participation, consultation and the obtaining of free, prior and informed consent and in access to environmental justice, particularly in the cases of Azacualpa and Clavo Rico.

53. In the case of the concession for the Clavo Rico mine in Choluteca, the Honduran Institute of Geology and Mines suspended mining activity in the municipality of El Corpus because of illegal mining activity in one area of that municipality, although there has still been no verification of the damage in terms of water sources, health, cultural heritage and, consequently, the enjoyment of human rights.

54. There appears to be insufficient information about the status of the environmental licensing process for the El Tablón hydroelectric project in Santa Bárbara. The consultation and participation processes are inadequate. Furthermore, the authorities have not taken steps to restore and preserve Montaña de Botaderos Carlos Escaleras Mejía National Park, as called for in Decree No. 18-2024. Although the Institute of Geology and Mines decided not to renew several concessions in the park, socioenvironmental conflicts between different actors and damage to the protected area continue and are aggravated by the new municipal permits for mineral beneficiation that are issued without considering due diligence standards and the prevention and precautionary principles.

E. Access to land and social conflict

55. Structural challenges remain in ensuring access to land for campesino communities, an essential condition for overcoming poverty, inequality and food insecurity. The absence of a unified register and the lack of updated municipal cadastre records and agrarian and national cadastres generate legal uncertainty with respect to property rights and collective ownership, facilitating the overlap of property titles.

56. In Agua Blanca Sur, in El Progreso, Yoro, the Office continued to document reports that campesino enterprises that had benefited from agrarian reform have been forced, through acts of intimidation and harassment and unlawful practices, to sell their land. The campesino enterprises have been seeking the restitution and recovery of these lands from the National Agrarian Institute since 2024 but have not received a response. This situation has led to criminal proceedings that are now under way against some 50 members of the campesino

²⁰ See <https://tnh.gob.hn/nacional/icf-defensa-de-los-bosques-registran-disminucion-del-87-por-deforestacion/>.

enterprises for the offence of unauthorized occupation and at least seven evictions since 2023 (one in 2025). In Choloma, Cortés, the registration, in favour of private parties, of titles to land allocated to or historically held by campesino communities has led to legal uncertainty regarding land tenure and a risk that the communities will be dispossessed by commercial companies and banking institutions whose ownership rights over the land have been recognized.

57. The Office documented an escalation of violence in Bajo Aguán in 2025, with 13 violent deaths (including that of one woman) among members of campesino cooperatives and their family members because of their role in defending the land. The Office has reasonable grounds to believe that at least 10 of these violent deaths are attributable to criminal organizations that exercise some territorial control in areas surrounding the campesino cooperatives. The patterns documented show that the victims were selected beforehand and targeted for their role in defending the land and, prior to their deaths, were subjected to threats and, in some cases, attempts to forcibly recruit them.

58. The violence perpetrated by criminal groups in Bajo Aguán has led to the forced displacement of members of campesino cooperatives, survivors and their family members. According to official sources, at least 468 campesino families have been displaced since December 2024, of whom at least 150 remain displaced. In May, a prosecutor filed the first charging document against members of one of these criminal organizations for the offences of forced displacement, unlawful deprivation of liberty, aggravated battery and criminal association.

59. Agreements between the Government and campesino groups in Bajo Aguán²¹ remain unimplemented. The executive decree that would authorize the establishment and operation of the truth commission has not been adopted. The lack of implementation also limits the ability to thoroughly investigate the legal background and origins of rural properties currently owned by agro-industrial companies in the area. Furthermore, the National Agrarian Institute has not implemented the mechanisms that are provided for under the agrarian laws and that are needed to clarify the legal status of disputed lands and to subsequently recover lands for allocation to campesino organizations.

F. Evictions

60. The Office documented nine forced evictions of members of campesino, Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities (eight carried out at the request of the State and one by private parties) nationwide, with the destruction of homes and personal belongings being recorded in seven of the cases and of crops in at least one. Five of the evictions were carried out as part of the neutralizing measures promoted by the Zero Deforestation Commission, and in one case dynamite and fire were used to destroy homes and property. Furthermore, no measures were reportedly taken to prevent the evicted persons from being left unprotected.

61. In addition, the Office documented at least three attempts to carry out evictions without an order from the competent authority that involved private security groups and State security forces, and one attempt that was carried out solely by non-State actors in Trujillo, Colón. The lack of an order issued by the competent authority and duly notified to the persons affected prevents those persons from challenging the measure and requesting alternative housing.

62. The so-called preventive eviction procedure,²² introduced under Legislative Decree No. 93-2021, remains in place in the legal system and, to date, no decision has been reached on any claims filed challenging its constitutionality. The procedure has limited the enjoyment by the persons evicted of their human rights, in particular the right to adequate housing.

63. The misuse of criminal law against defenders of land and territory in their work, especially criminal provisions related to organized crime, and the failure to apply an ancestral property rights-based approach in determining criminal responsibility are sources of concern.

²¹ A/HRC/52/24, para. 24.

²² A/HRC/58/23, para. 47.

VI. Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans

64. Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans continued to face challenges with respect to the recognition, delimitation, demarcation, titling, expansion and legal regularization of their lands, territories and natural resources by virtue of their ancestral rights. They also continued to be affected by extractive projects that interfere with their livelihoods, cultural knowledge and own ways of interacting with nature.

65. The Office also noted that, despite State efforts to combat all forms of discrimination, structural and institutional patterns of historically unequal treatment of Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans persist, which not only hinder their full enjoyment of their human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment, but also limit their effective participation in decision-making forums on matters that affect them.

A. Garifuna communities

66. Although 10 years have passed since the Inter-American Court of Human Rights²³ issued its judgments, the State has not made progress in complying with them or in regularizing the ancestral territories of Garifuna communities, including those of Triunfo de la Cruz, Punta Piedra and San Juan. The lack of measures to ensure that the High-level Intersectoral Commission for Compliance with International Judgments²⁴ was operational exposed the communities of Triunfo de la Cruz, Punta Piedra and San Juan to violence, threats and/or the continued dispossession of their lands, as the presence of third parties and private actors increases the pressures on the territory and the communities.

67. In 2025, the Office documented the registration by an agro-industrial company of title to property and of transfers to third parties against the ancestral title previously granted to the Garifuna community of Nueva Armenia. This situation has impaired the community's effective enjoyment of human rights and of its territory and natural resources. The community has also faced acts of harassment by private security companies.

68. The ancestral Garifuna territory of La Rosita, Cayo Venado and Nueva Go in Esparta, Atlántida, continues to be affected by the presence of third parties who engage in harassment and threats, limiting the effective enjoyment of the ancestral territory. In 2002, the communities submitted applications for the recognition of their territory to the National Agrarian Institute. Despite the considerable amount of time that has passed, they have still not received a decision. The lack of a timely response from the State places the communities in a vulnerable situation because of the persistent legal uncertainty.

B. Miskito, Tawahka, Pech, and Garifuna communities in La Mosquitia

69. According to data compiled by the National Institute of Statistics in 2023, in the department of Gracias a Dios, which is home to Miskito, Tawahka, Pech and Garifuna communities, 78.1% of households live in poverty and 62% in extreme poverty.²⁵ Poverty in La Mosquitia is linked to a combination of structural, geographic, social and economic factors that result in a context of multidimensional poverty, with people facing multiple simultaneous deprivations that affect their well-being and quality of life.²⁶

70. The Office documented serious deficiencies in housing conditions in rural areas of La Mosquitia, due to the lack of basic services such as drinking water, electricity, sanitation and

²³ *Garifuna Community of Triunfo de la Cruz and Its Members v. Honduras*, Judgment, 8 October 2015; and *The Punta Piedra Garifuna Community and Its Members v. Honduras*, Judgment, 8 October 2015. In the judgments, Honduras was found internationally responsible for violations of the rights to collective property, to prior consultation on projects affecting the territory and to judicial guarantees for both communities.

²⁴ [A/HRC/57/75](#), para. 43; and [A/HRC/58/23](#), para. 41.

²⁵ See <https://temp.ine.gob.hn/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Consolidada-EPPHM-2023.pdf>.

²⁶ See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/04/24/betting-on-sustainability-in-the-mosquitia-honduras-to-create-new-livelihoods>.

waste management. The Office also noted poor health conditions due to the lack of accessible health centres and of trained medical personnel, which limits effective access to adequate healthcare. It also identified obstacles that hinder access to sufficient and nutritious food, which are related to the scarcity of inputs for growing crops, the impact of extreme climate events, geographical isolation and the lack of State support for traditional agricultural practices. According to World Bank data, 43% of the population of La Mosquitia is affected by food insecurity.²⁷

71. The Office documented the presence in ancestral territories in La Mosquitia of individuals tied primarily to extensive livestock farming, deforestation for the creation of grazing lands, illegal logging and drug trafficking. It also received allegations of violence related to land purchases and land-grabbing, including threats, harassment and attacks against Indigenous persons, and of the lack of a timely response from the competent authorities. The lack of State action to guarantee the effective protection of the territory and undertake the legal regularization that would effectively ensure its possession and use affects the communities' right to their ancestral territory.

72. During two monitoring visits in the region, the Office observed deforestation caused by forest fires and the illegal exploitation of forest and mining resources in core areas of the Rio Plátano Biosphere Reserve and on rivers such as the Patuca, Sigre, Coco or Segovia, Warunta, Rus Rus and Mocerón. These illegal activities reportedly seriously compromise biodiversity, the environment and the livelihoods of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities.

73. The Office welcomes the creation of a criminal court with national jurisdiction over environmental matters in La Mosquitia. However, it expresses concern about the absence of structural, participatory and culturally appropriate measures to guarantee the full exercise by members of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in La Mosquitia of their human rights.

74. The challenges faced by the communities located in La Mosquitia in enjoying their human rights are, in part, the result of a deeply unequal and exclusionary structure, marked by the historical marginalization of the Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans who live in the region. The continued presence of these conditions perpetuates cycles of poverty, violence and human rights violations.

C. Lenca communities

75. In 2025, the National Agrarian Institute granted title to 14 blocks to the El Cacao Lenca Indigenous Council. However, it is a concern that the Indigenous councils of Potrerillos, Gracias a Dios, Río Bonito, Nueva Esperanza and El Achiotal, in the department of Comayagua, continue to face serious difficulties in gaining access to land and territory and exercising their rights over them. Although requests have been made to the National Agrarian Institute, these councils have not received an effective response regarding the delimitation, titling and regularization of their territories. This inaction has contributed to the continuation of harassment and threats, including criminal complaints and proceedings, repeated arrests by the authorities, even when arrest warrants had already been executed, and threats of forced evictions by private actors and local authorities.

VII. Recommendations

76. **The High Commissioner reiterates the recommendations contained in his previous reports²⁸ and urges the authorities to implement them. He reaffirms his commitment to continue supporting Honduras in its efforts to strengthen the promotion and protection of and respect for human rights and recommends that it:**

²⁷ See <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156994/?iso3=HND>.

²⁸ [A/HRC/52/24](#), [A/HRC/49/21](#), [A/HRC/46/75](#), [A/HRC/43/3/Add.2](#), [A/HRC/40/3/Add.2](#), [A/HRC/34/3/Add.2](#), [A/HRC/57/75](#) and [A/HRC/58/23](#).

- (a) **Adopt a comprehensive public safety strategy, under civilian leadership, that is based on prevention and criminal investigation and incorporates internal controls and independent oversight, including judicial oversight, of police and military forces, in accordance with international human rights standards;**
- (b) **Revoke the state of emergency in effect and ensure that declarations of states of emergency and the suspension of rights are exceptional and in strict compliance with international human rights law;**
- (c) **Reform the electoral legal framework to include a procedure for the appointment of members of the National Electoral Council and judges of the Electoral Court on the basis of their independence, competence and suitability and not of their party membership;**
- (d) **Adopt a guide to police procedure that incorporates international human rights standards in policing, including by strengthening accountability;**
- (e) **Adopt, as a matter of urgency, a comprehensive prison reform plan that provides for the gradual handover of prison management to civilian authorities and ensures the classification of persons deprived of liberty in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules);**
- (f) **Adopt a policy of strategic criminal prosecution that ensures swift and timely criminal investigations into human rights violations and abuses and provides for increased human resources, and allocate financial resources for the special prosecutors' offices and the Specialist Criminal Investigation Agency;**
- (g) **Define enforced disappearance as a separate offence under the Criminal Code, taking into account the recommendations of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances,²⁹ and adopt a specific protocol on investigations and searches for persons that does not involve the police;**
- (h) **Ensure the financial autonomy of the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights and the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the national preventive mechanism, to ensure that they are operationally functional and able to fulfil their oversight duties;**
- (i) **Implement a protocol for the confidential handling of information on persons covered by the National System for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials, with regular internal audits, mechanisms for reporting leaks and penalties;**
- (j) **Establish regional offices of the Directorate General of the Protection System in high-risk areas, with trained personnel, adequate resources, active inter-institutional coordination and mechanisms for consultation with persons covered by the System to define protection measures adapted to the local context;**
- (k) **Take the necessary measures to ensure that all judicial decisions relating to protection measures are reflected in real time in the NACMIS computerized case registration and monitoring system used by the judiciary and law enforcement agencies;**
- (l) **Adopt a due diligence protocol for the investigation of crimes against human rights defenders;**
- (m) **Adopt a new regulatory framework that guarantees media pluralism, gives community media equitable access to the radio spectrum and provides for adequate conditions for their sustainability;**
- (n) **Adopt and implement the pending reforms to the environmental regulatory and institutional frameworks, including the Environment Act and the regulations on the national environmental impact assessment system and the national**

²⁹ [CED/C/HND/OAI/1](#).

register of environmental service providers, with respect to free, prior and informed consultation with Indigenous Peoples and the effective monitoring and oversight of environmental licenses and mining concessions to prevent environmental, social and cultural impacts;

(o) Consolidate the cadastral registers of the Property Institute and the National Agrarian Institute;

(p) Adopt the executive decree establishing the truth commission of Bajo Aguán;

(q) Repeal Executive Decree No. 93-2021 on the preventive eviction procedure or make the necessary amendments to ensure its compatibility with international human rights law;

(r) Allocate sufficient resources to the National Agrarian Institute for the delimitation, demarcation, titling and effective regularization of the territories of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities, with their full participation and in full consultation with them;

(s) Take due account of and implement the recommendations adopted and reparations awarded by the United Nations human rights mechanisms and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, including those related to the rights of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities.
