



Swedish Presidency of the European Union  
Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Frederik Reinfeldt  
Swedish Government Offices  
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REHABILITERINGS- OG  
FORSKNINGSCENTRET  
FOR TORTUROFRE

REHABILITATION AND  
RESEARCH CENTRE  
FOR TORTURE VICTIMS

Copenhagen, 18 August 2009

**RE: Request for urgent action regarding the human rights situation in Honduras**

*His Excellency, the Prime Minister of Sweden,*

The Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims (RCT) respectfully take the liberty of seeking your assistance in connection with the current crisis in Honduras and the ongoing human rights violations occurring in the country under the de facto government of Honduras.

Since the coup d'État in Honduras on 28 June 2009, the RCT has received a series of credible reports of gross human rights violations, notably killings, torture, ill-treatment, arbitrary detention and "disappearance" of students, human rights defenders and others in connection with peaceful demonstrations against the coup. The reports come from RCT's long-standing partner organization in Honduras, Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de las Víctimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares (CPTRT). Please find enclosed CPTRT's recent report and press release, dated 12 August 2009, which describes the wide range of human rights violations that have occurred since the coup took place. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch also report on similar violations and of excessive use of force by the security forces.

We are gravely concerned by these serious human rights violations and the seemingly escalating situation in Honduras, which prompted our organization on 13 August 2009, together with the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) to urge the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Professor Manfred Nowak, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders, Ms. Margaret Sekaggya, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Professor Philip Alston, and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to take urgent action on these issues. Specifically, we are requesting these UN mechanisms to call upon the de facto government of Honduras to cease the serious violations of human rights, including the killing of civilians and the assaults

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against human rights defenders, to restore justice and the rule of law, and to guarantee respect for human rights and fundamental liberties in Honduras.

The RCT wishes to express its appreciation of the important work of the Swedish Presidency of the EU. We are very encouraged by the timely action taken by the EU to contribute to the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Honduras and the condemnation of incitements to violence, notably the Declarations and Statements by the EU Presidency on the situation in Honduras.

However, we are still very concerned about the continued human rights violations, which affect innocent civilians and the Honduran society as a whole. We are particularly alarmed by the continued practice of torture and ill-treatment, which are amongst the most abhorrent violations of human rights and dignity. We fear that if these practices are allowed to continue, the current crisis may have repercussions in the neighbouring countries, hereby causing regional instability in Central America.

Therefore, the RCT respectfully wishes to urge the Swedish Government in its capacity as the present holder of the EU Presidency to take urgent action by calling upon the de facto government of Honduras to cease the serious violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms and to restore justice and the rule of law in Honduras. We particularly appeal you to request the present Honduras leadership to put an end to torture and violence, which continues to rage the country.

We remain at your disposal, if you should require any further information regarding the current crisis situation in Honduras. We thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

Bengt H. Sjölund  
Director General, RCT

Cc: Mr. Carl Bildt, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Ms. Cecilia Malmström, Swedish Minister for EU Affairs  
Ambassador Christian Danielsson, Swedish EU Presidency of the EU,  
Brussels

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