

President

John Hendy QC
Lawyer, UK

Vice Presidents

Kurshid Ahmed
General Secretary, All Pakistan
Workers Confederation

Professor Jan Buelens
Advocaat, Progress Lawyers'
Network, Belgium

Dr. Anita Chan
Academic, Australia

Dr. Ericson Crivelli
Advogado, Crivelli Advogados
Associados, Brazil

Professor Keith Ewing
Academic lawyer, UK

Fathi El-Fadl
Director, Trade Union Rights
Centre (independent NGO), Sudan

Esther Lynch
Confederal Secretary,
European Trade Union
Confederation

Lornts Nagelhus,
Advokat, LO Norway

Yoshikazu Odagawa,
Secretary General,
Zenroren, Japan

Jeffrey Sack QC
Lawyer, Canada

Jitendra Sharma
Senior Advocate,
Supreme Court of India

Jeff Sissons,
General Counsel,
New Zealand Council
of Trade Unions

Surya Tjandra,
Lawyer and Director of the
Trade Union Rights Centre,
Indonesia

Ozlem Yildirim,
Policy Officer,
International Department
CGT France

Director

Daniel Blackburn, MA,
barrister

Researcher

Ciaran Cross, LL.M.



International Centre for Trade Union Rights

Centro Internacional para los Derechos Sindicales
Centre International pour les Droits Syndicaux

Address: 177 Abbeville Road, London SW4 9RL , UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7498 4700
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7498 0611
E-mail: ictur@ictur.org
Web: www.ictur.org

ICTUR was founded to
defend and extend trade union rights and
to raise awareness of these rights and their violations
around the world

By e-mail:

diseloalpresidente@presidencia.gob.hn
info@presidencia.gob.hn
info@trabajo.gob.hn
choluteca@conadeh.hn
central@conadeh.hn

Attn:

President Juan Orlando Hernández
Casa Presidencial
Barrio Las Lomas, Boulevard Juan Pablo II
Tegucigalpa
Honduras

CC:

Carlos Alberto Madero Erazo, Secretaría de Estado en los despachos de
Trabajo y Seguridad Social
Comisionado Nacional Derechos Humanos (CONADEH)
Federación de Sindicatos de Trabajadores de la Agroindustria
(FESTAGRO)
International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant,
Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)

May 2017

Dear President Juan Orlando Hernández,

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights is writing to express grave concerns about the climate of violence and intimidation faced by trade unionists in Honduras.

ICTUR understands that on 15 April 2017 in the city of Choluteca, near to the 'Los Balcanes' plantation, the General Secretary of Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Agroindustria y Similares (STAS, Union of Agroindustrial and Allied Workers) Moisés Sánchez and his brother Misael - a member of the union - were attacked by unknown assailants armed with handguns and machetes after leaving a trade union meeting. It is further understood that the two were held hostage for some forty minutes and expressly threatened for their union activities on Fyffes's

melon plantations. Misael Sánchez was seriously injured in the attack and hospitalised. It is understood that the two victims have already filed a complaint to the corresponding authorities and Honduran National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH).

Honduras has ratified all eight of the ILO's Fundamental Conventions. The ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association has clearly stated that the rights of workers can only be "exercised in a climate that is free from violence, pressure or threats of any kind against the leaders and members of these organizations, and it is for governments to ensure that this principle is respected" (*Digest of decisions and principles of the Freedom of Association Committee of the Governing Body of the ILO*, Fifth Edition, 2006, paras. 42-45). Failure to hold guilty parties to account creates a culture of impunity, "which reinforces the climate of violence and insecurity, and which is extremely damaging to the exercise of trade union rights" (*ILO Digest*, para. 52).

ICTUR has previously written to the Honduran government on several occasions and we take this opportunity to again demand a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the murders, disappearances, threats and acts of violence perpetrated against trade unionists in Honduras.

The ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association has declared that an independent judicial inquiry should be instituted immediately to investigate assaults on the physical or moral integrity of individuals, in order to determine responsibility, punish those responsible and prevent repetition (*ILO Digest*, paras. 46, 50, 184, 191). ICTUR calls on the government to investigate the circumstances around the attacks on Moisés and Misael Sánchez, as well as the campaign of intimidation and violence against trade unionists in Honduras, and to undertake all necessary measures to ensure the fundamental freedoms of workers to join and form unions and to take action in defence of their interests. ICTUR will report these incidents in the journal *International Union Rights*, which was established in 1993, and which enjoys a readership in more than 100 countries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Blackburn', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Blackburn, Director