Committee against Torture

List of issues prior to the submission of the second periodic report of Honduras (CAT/C/HND/2), adopted by the Committee at its forty-eighth session, held from 7 May to 1 June 2012*

Specific information on the implementation of articles 1 to 16 of the Convention, including with regard to the Committee’s previous recommendations

Articles 1 and 4

1. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (paras. 7 and 8), please provide information on the measures taken by the State party to ensure that a definition of torture is included in its revised criminal legislation that covers all the elements contained in article 1 of the Convention, that provisions criminalizing all acts of torture are incorporated and that appropriate penalties for such acts are prescribed. If this has not yet been done, please explain why. Please also indicate what legislative measures have been taken by the State party to repeal the statute of limitations for crimes involving torture.2

2. As recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (para. 11), please provide information on whether enforced disappearance has been specifically criminalized in the State party.3 If so, please provide the text of the relevant legislation.

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* The present list of issues was adopted by the Committee at its forty-eighth session, according to the new optional procedure established by the Committee at its thirty-eighth session, which consists in the preparation and adoption of lists of issues to be transmitted to States parties prior to the submission of their respective periodic report. The replies of the State party to this list of issues will constitute its report under article 19 of the Convention.

1 Paragraph numbers in brackets refer to the previous concluding observations adopted by the Committee (CAT/C/HND/CO/1).

2 CAT/OP/HND/1, paras. 75–78; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/1, para. 19; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 6; A/HRC/16/10, paras. 58 and 85 (b); and A/HRC/13/66, para. 12.

3 A/HRC/7/2/Add.1, paras. 29–40 and 64; A/HRC/16/48/Add.2, paras. 11–20 and the tracking table concerning the recommendations set out by the Committee in A/HRC/7/2/Add.1, para. 66; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/2, para. 25; and A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 6.
Article 2

3. In the light of the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 9), please provide information on the measures taken and the procedures in place to ensure that, in law and in practice, all persons deprived of their liberty are guaranteed the right to be informed of the reason for their arrest, to have access to a lawyer of their choice, to contact family members and to promptly receive an independent medical examination. Please comment on the information given in the report on the visit made to Honduras by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture regarding effective compliance by the police with article 282 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Please also comment on complaints of bad practice in the application of procedures for detention provided for under the Police and Harmonious Social Relations Act.

4. Please provide information on the steps taken by the State party to provide the Office of the Public Defender with the necessary human and financial resources to enable it to guarantee free legal assistance for all persons deprived of their liberty who require it.

5. With regard to the designation in 2008 of the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CONAPREV) as the national preventive mechanism, please indicate what measures have been adopted to ensure the allocation of a sufficient budget and resources to allow it to operate effectively in accordance with the requirements of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and the Guidelines on National Preventive Mechanisms (CAT/OP/12/5). Please provide information on the level of follow-up given to the recommendations made by CONAPREV in connection with its visits to detention centres. Please also indicate the measures taken to make reports published by CONAPREV available to the general public and public officials.

6. Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that the activities of the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) are in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/134 (Paris Principles). Please indicate whether the Office is mandated to receive and consider complaints from private individuals. If so, please provide statistics on the number and type of complaints received during the reporting period and on the follow-up given to any complaints of torture and ill-treatment received. Please explain whether the Office can make unannounced visits to detention centres and how many such visits have been made during the reporting period.

7. In the light of the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 10), please provide information on the measures taken to ensure the full independence of the judiciary. Please comment on reports that judges and magistrates identified as opponents of the 2009
coup d’État have been subjected to intimidation and harassment. In this regard, information is requested on the disciplinary proceedings against magistrate Tirza del Carmen Flores and judges Guillermo López Lone, Ramón Enrique Barrios and Luis Alonso Chévez de la Rocha for their alleged involvement in activities in opposition to the coup d’État. Please also provide information on the concrete steps taken to ensure that verbal attacks by Government officials upon prosecutors in the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights of the Public Prosecution Service are punished. In particular, please provide the Committee with information on statements made by the Deputy Secretary of Security, Armando Calidonio, criticizing the opening of an investigation into the deaths of seven alleged gang members in Ciudad Planeta by the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights of the Public Prosecution Service.

8. Please provide information on the mandate, membership and working methods of the Public Security Reform Commission established by the National Congress in February 2012. What measures have been taken to ensure the Commission’s independence from the executive branch?

9. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 21), please provide updated information on the measures taken by the State party to prevent and combat violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence, and to punish the perpetrators of such violence. Please also comment on reports that the number of women murdered in Honduras has risen in recent years. Please provide detailed information on the special training and awareness-raising programmes provided for law enforcement personnel and other officials who come into direct contact with victims of gender-based violence. Please provide statistics on the different forms of violence against women and the number of decisions handed down by the courts in this regard, including the number of convictions and corresponding penalties.

10. According to information before the Committee, violence against transgender persons is a serious problem in Honduras: 10 transgender women were murdered between November 2010 and November 2011 in attacks ranging from armed assault to ones in which the victims were set on fire. Please comment on reports concerning the alleged involvement of members of the police force in some of these crimes. Please provide information on the measures taken to prevent the torture and ill-treatment of this group. Please include statistics on the number of complaints received and investigated, as well as the number of prosecutions and convictions in such cases.

11. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 13), please provide information on the legal framework that is in place to combat trafficking in persons for purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation. Please provide details on the impact of the Action Plan to Combat the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (2006–2011) and the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour (2008–2015) and the specific measures taken for their implementation. Please also indicate the number of complaints lodged, investigations and prosecutions undertaken, and convictions and sentences handed down. Please provide information on the measures

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12 CEDAW/C/HON/CO/6, paras. 20–21; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/1, para. 87; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/2, paras. 35–38; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, paras. 33–34; and A/HRC/16/10, paras. 61 and 85 (d).
taken to establish an effective mechanism to identify victims of trafficking found in the State party who are in need of international protection.

Article 3

12. Please provide detailed information on legislation relating to asylum and refugee status. Please indicate the number of refugees, asylum seekers and other non-citizens, such as immigrants or stateless persons, present in the State party’s territory. Please also provide information about the number of persons, disaggregated by country of origin, who have been granted asylum or humanitarian protection and the number of those who have been returned, extradited or expelled since the consideration of the State party’s initial report. Please provide details of the grounds on which they were sent back and a list of the countries to which individuals were returned. Please provide detailed information on the types of appeal mechanisms that exist, on whether any appeals have been made and, if so, their outcome.

13. Please indicate the number of cases of refoulement, extradition and expulsion carried out by the State party during the reporting period on the basis of its acceptance of diplomatic assurances or the equivalent thereof, as well as any instances in which the State party has offered such diplomatic assurances or guarantees. What are the minimum contents of any such assurances or guarantees, whether given or received, and what measures with regard to subsequent monitoring have been taken in such cases?

Articles 5, 7, 8 and 9

14. Please indicate what legislative or other measures have been taken to implement article 5 of the Convention. Under national law, are acts of torture considered universal offences, wherever they occur and whatever the nationality of the perpetrator or victim? Please provide relevant examples of any such prosecutions.

15. Please inform the Committee what extradition treaties have been concluded with other States parties and indicate whether the offences referred to in article 4 of the Convention are included as extraditable offences in those treaties.

16. Please clarify what mutual judicial assistance treaties or agreements Honduras has entered into with other entities, such as countries, international tribunals or international institutions, and whether such treaties or agreements have led in practice to the transfer of any evidence in connection with prosecutions concerning torture or ill-treatment. Please provide examples.

Article 10

17. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 15), please provide information on training programmes developed by the State party to ensure that all law enforcement officials and members of the armed forces are fully aware of the provisions of the Convention and of the fact that breaches will not be tolerated and will be investigated and that offenders will be prosecuted. Please also indicate whether the State party has developed a methodology to assess the effectiveness and impact of training programmes in terms of the reduction of cases of torture and ill-treatment and, if so, please provide information on the content and implementation of that methodology.

13 A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 44.
18. Please provide detailed information on training programmes designed to teach judges, prosecutors, forensic doctors and medical personnel who deal with detained persons how to detect and document the physical and psychological sequelae of torture. Do such programmes include specific training with regard to the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (the Istanbul Protocol)?

Article 11

19. Please describe the procedures in place for ensuring compliance with article 11 of the Convention and provide information on any new rules, instructions, methods and practices or arrangements for custody that may have been introduced since the consideration of the previous report in 2009. Please also indicate the frequency with which they are reviewed.

20. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 17), please indicate what steps have been taken to:

   (a) Improve living conditions and address problems of overcrowding in prisons and other detention centres.\(^{14}\) In particular, please indicate the measures taken to comply with the decisions handed down by the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court with reference to the improvement of living conditions for persons held in prisons.\(^{15}\) Please include statistics, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic origin and nationality, on the number of prisoners who are prosecuted and convicted and the occupancy rate of all places of detention for the period 2009–2013. Please also provide information on the number of persons deprived of their liberty in psychiatric hospitals and other institutions for persons with mental or physical disabilities;

   (b) Ensure the strict separation in prisons of convicts from remand prisoners,\(^{16}\) women from men\(^{17}\) and minors from adults;\(^{18}\)

   (c) Develop strategies to reduce inter-prisoner violence. Please provide information on the frequency of violence among prisoners, including any cases involving possible negligence on the part of law enforcement personnel, and the number of complaints made in this regard. What preventive measures have been taken?

21. Please provide information on efforts by the State party to meet the special needs of minors in detention and to address the concerns that the Committee expressed in its previous concluding observations (para. 19) regarding the widespread use of preventive detention for minors accused of serious offences such as membership in youth gangs or maras.\(^{19}\)

22. In the light of the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 16), please provide statistics on the deaths in custody that occurred during the reporting period, disaggregated by the place of deprivation of liberty, sex, age, ethnic origin and nationality.

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\(^{15}\) CAT/OP/HND/1, paras. 186–196.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., paras. 182, 188, 192, 200, 202 and 300; A/HRC/4/40/Add.4, para. 102; and CCPR/C/HND/CO/1, para. 15.

\(^{17}\) CAT/OP/HND/1, paras. 259–260 and 320.

\(^{18}\) CAT/C/HND/CO/1, para. 17.

\(^{19}\) CRC/C/HND/CO/3, paras. 80–82; CCPR/C/HND/CO/1, para. 15; A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/1, para. 12; A/HRC/4/40/Add.4, paras. 86–94 and 103; and A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 50.
of the deceased and the cause of death. Please provide detailed information on the results of the investigations into these deaths and on the measures taken to prevent the reoccurrence of similar cases. Please indicate whether, in any of the cases, relatives received compensation.

23. Please provide full details on the findings of the investigation announced by the President of Honduras following the fire that occurred on 15 February 2012 in the Comayagua Prison Farm, in which more than 350 prisoners died. Please indicate whether the investigation has facilitated the opening of independent inquiries and the results thereof. Please also provide information on the prosecution of the perpetrators in each case and the sentences imposed upon them.

**Articles 12 and 13**

24. Please indicate whether the allegations that serious human rights violations, including summary executions,\(^{20}\) deaths resulting from the excessive use of force by the police and army,\(^{21}\) arbitrary detentions,\(^{22}\) cases of torture and ill-treatment of detainees\(^{23}\) and enforced disappearance,\(^{24}\) were committed in the course of the suppression of demonstrations and social protests held to demand the restoration of the constitutional order following the events of 28 June 2009 have been investigated outside the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process and whether appropriate judicial action has been taken.\(^{25}\) Please indicate the number of cases prosecuted, the identities of the alleged perpetrators, the charges against them and, where applicable, the verdicts.

25. Please also indicate the number of complaints, investigations, convictions and sentences imposed relating to cases of violence against women, including sexual violence, which have occurred during the suppression of demonstrations or in places of detention since 2009, as well as the preventive measures taken in this regard.\(^{26}\)

26. According to a report published by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in July 2011, members of the Honduran armed forces and officials of the different national police directorates have taken part in the “systematic obstruction” of criminal investigations into serious human rights violations. Please comment on these incidents and on any measures taken to address them.

27. Please provide detailed information on the content and scope of the Amnesty Decree approved by the National Congress on 26 January 2010.

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\(^{22}\) OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 55, paras. 335–382; and A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 23.


\(^{24}\) A/HRC/13/31, para. 252.


\(^{26}\) A/HRC/13/66, paras. 57–63; and OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 55, paras. 514–529.
28. Please provide information on the measures taken to address the shortage of resources in the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights of the Public Prosecution Service and the shortcomings of the witness protection programme.

29. Please comment on reports that there have been many cases of police brutality and ill-treatment of detainees during the reporting period, in particular by the police patrols and members of the National Criminal Investigation Directorate. Please provide statistics on complaints of torture and ill-treatment during the period 2009–2013. If possible, these data should be disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic origin and nationality of victims. Please also provide detailed information on the outcome of the investigations into those complaints, in particular regarding the prosecutions and penalties in each case.

30. Please provide information on all complaints relating to enforced disappearance committed by law enforcement officials during the reporting period. Please also provide information on the steps taken to investigate the cases of enforced disappearance that occurred under authoritarian regimes prior to 1982 and on the outcome of those investigations.

31. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 12), please indicate what measures have been taken to investigate allegations of extrajudicial killings, in particular of minors. Please indicate how many cases have been investigated, how many individuals have been prosecuted and what penalties have been imposed, if any, on those responsible.

32. Please elaborate on the measures taken to establish an independent external monitoring mechanism to investigate allegations of unlawful acts committed by law enforcement officials, as recommended by the Committee (para. 20 (a)). Please comment on the repeal of Decree No. 287-2009, which provided for the creation of a technical directorate for criminal investigations attached to the Public Prosecutor’s Office which would be independent from the national police force.

Article 14

33. Please provide information on redress and compensation measures, including means of rehabilitation, ordered by the courts and actually provided to victims of torture, or their families, since the consideration of the initial report in 2009. This information should include the number of claims lodged, the number granted and the amounts ordered and those actually provided in each case. Please also provide updated information on the current status of the bill on comprehensive compensation for victims of human rights violations.
34. Please clarify whether the right to compensation is conditional upon the existence of a judgement in criminal proceedings ordering compensation. Please indicate how many victims have been compensated even though the perpetrator has not been identified. Do investigations into such cases continue until the perpetrator(s) is/are identified and brought to justice? Can compensation be obtained by a victim of torture or ill-treatment if the perpetrator has been subjected to a disciplinary, but not a criminal, penalty?

35. Please provide information on reparation programmes, including those providing for the treatment of trauma and other forms of rehabilitation, made available to victims of torture and ill-treatment, as well as on the allocation of adequate resources to ensure the effective operation of such programmes. Please provide information on the level of collaboration with specialized non-governmental organizations in this area and indicate whether the Government provides financial and/or other support for their effective implementation.

Article 16

36. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 25), please assess the effectiveness of the measures taken to prevent attacks on journalists, human rights defenders and political activists and to protect their lives and physical integrity. In this regard, please inform the Committee of the outcome of the investigations into:

(a) The murder on 14 March 2010 of Nahún Eli Palacios Arteaga, News Director for television channel 5 in Aguan, for whom protective measures had been granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;

(b) The serious threats received in February 2011 by Leo Valladares Lanza, Director of the Asociación para una Ciudadanía Activa (ACI-Participa), former Honduras National Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights; and

(c) Police attacks on prominent activists working to defend natural resources: Gonzalo Cruz, member of the Coordinadora Integral del Taragual and the Red en Defensa de los Derechos de los Bienes Comunes, on 7 January 2012; and Father Marco Aurelio Lorenzo, on 26 December 2011.

37. Please provide information on the number of reported cases of ill-treatment or physical abuse of asylum seekers committed by law enforcement officials since the consideration of the State party’s initial report and the penalties imposed on the perpetrators of such acts.

38. According to information before the Committee, corporal punishment is still lawful in the home and alternative care settings. Please elaborate on the steps taken by the State party to prohibit corporal punishment by law and to enforce that prohibition in all settings.


39 CRC/C/HND/CO/3, paras. 54–55; and A/HRC/WG.6/9/HND/3, para. 32.
Other issues

39. With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 29), is the State party considering making the declaration provided for under articles 21 and 22 of the Convention?

40. In paragraph 31 of its previous concluding observations, the Committee requested Honduras to provide, within one year, information on its implementation of the Committee’s recommendations contained in paragraphs 9, 11, 13, 14, 18 and 19. On 28 March 2011, the Special Rapporteur for follow-up to concluding observations sent a reminder to the Permanent Mission of Honduras to the United Nations Office at Geneva. Please send the requested information for assessment.

41. Please provide information on the legislative, administrative and other measures undertaken by the State party to respond to the threat of terrorist acts, and please describe whether, and how, these measures have affected human rights safeguards in law and practice. In this respect, the Committee would like to recall Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 1456 (2003), 1535 (2004), 1566 (2004) and 1624 (2005), all of which reiterate that States must “ensure that any measure[s] taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, and should adopt such measures in accordance with international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law”. Please describe the relevant training given to law enforcement officers, the number and types of convictions handed down under such legislation, the legal remedies available to persons subject to antiterrorist measures, whether there are complaints of non-observance of international standards, and the outcome of those complaints.\(^\text{40}\)

42. With reference to its previous concluding observations (para. 28), the Committee invites the State party to submit its core document in accordance with the requirements concerning the common core document set forth in the harmonized guidelines on reporting adopted by the international human rights treaty bodies, which are contained in document HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6 (chap. I).

General information on the human rights situation in the State party, including information on new measures and developments relating to the implementation of the Convention

43. Please provide detailed information on new developments concerning the legal and institutional framework within which human rights are promoted and protected at the national level that have occurred since the initial report, including any relevant jurisprudential decisions.

44. Please provide detailed information on the new political, administrative and other measures taken to promote and protect human rights at the national level since the submission of the initial report, including information on any national human rights plans or programmes, the resources allocated thereto, and the corresponding means, objectives and results.

45. Please provide any other information on new measures undertaken and any other developments in connection with the implementation of the Convention and the Committee’s recommendations since the consideration of the initial report in May 2009, including the corresponding statistics, as well as information on any other events that may have occurred in the State party which are relevant under the Convention.