

## THE ALARMING NUMBER OF ATTACKS AGAINST TRANS WOMEN AND TRANS HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS CONTINUES. NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE

PBI Honduras is extremely concerned over the high number of attacks against trans women and individuals who defend trans rights, as well as the impunity that has continued in these cases. We are particularly concerned by the security situation of the members of the **Muñecas Trans Women's Collective of Arcoiris LGBT Association**, which has been accompanied by PBI since 2015. Despite having protective measures from the Honduran National Protection Mechanism, the Muñecas Collective has experienced an increase in attacks and assaults over the last six months.

Since the assassination of trans rights defender Bessy Ferrera and the attempted murder of Vicky Carvajal in July 2019, Arcoiris has reported at least 15 security incidents, including cases of intimidation, threats, surveillance, physical assaults, muggings, attempted kidnapping and attempted murder.

This situation is worsened by the lack of advances in investigations and the lack of sentencing in these cases. This is a generalised issue in Honduras, where the impunity rate for crimes against the LGBTQI+ collective is over 95%, according to data from the Honduran National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH)<sup>1</sup>.

*On January 20, the trans rights defender and Arcoiris member, Paola Flores, alongside Arianna Michelle Díaz Gómez from the Cozumel Trans Human Rights Association, were travelling in a taxi to their home in Tegucigalpa when they were followed by two unknown men riding a motorcycle. Due to the incident, they decided to stop. Upon leaving the taxi, they were shot at several times with a firearm. Paola was shot in the right leg, while Arianna Michelle Díaz Gómez managed to escape unharmed.*

According to data from the Cattrachas Lesbian Network Observatory, between 2009 and 2019 at least 350 LGBTQI+ individuals were murdered in Honduras, of which 111 were trans<sup>2</sup>. The Network also reports that in 2019, at least 40 members of the LGBTQI+ community were murdered: 25 gay men, 6 lesbian women, and 9 trans individuals.

The absence of regulations that integrate United Nations (UN) resolutions on non-discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and the lack of national laws that protect the basic rights of members of the LGBTQI+ community, put the lives of LGBTQI+ rights defenders in Honduras at risk. Additionally, the persistence of discriminatory socio-cultural patterns at all levels of Honduran society impacts the response of public officials. According to Social Attitudes studies conducted by the American organisation Pew Research Centre, 88% of the Honduran public considers homosexuality to be an immoral behaviour<sup>3</sup>.

The result is that, despite being a minority, the trans community is extremely vulnerable and at risk of facing a high number of hate crimes, including physical assaults and transfemicides.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.latribuna.hn/2018/05/17/conadeh-95-crimenes-personas-lgtbi-honduras-estan-la-impunidad/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cattrachas.org/images/Muertes-violentas-Cattrachas-2009-2019.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://primiciahonduras.hn/matrimonio-gay-una-maldicion-invento-del-infierno-evelio-reyes/>