



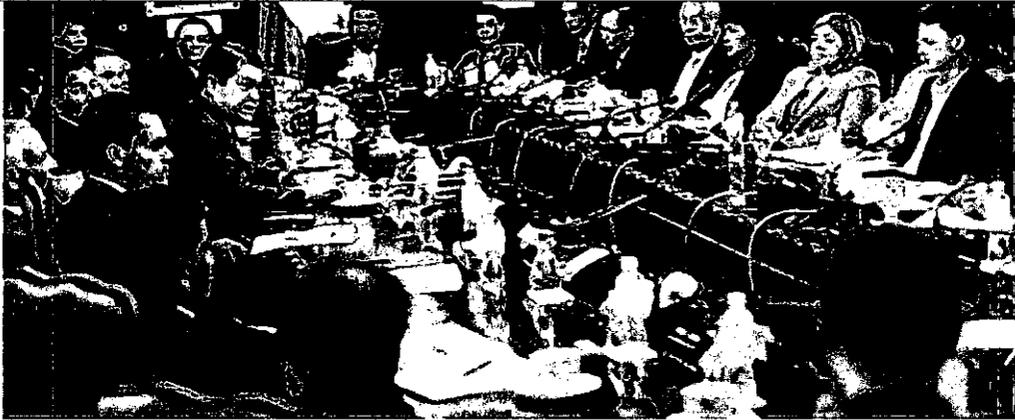
## Honduran President Urges Libre Alliance to Respect Freedom of Press, Join National Dialogue



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TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras, Jan. 19, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, President Juan Orlando Hernández urged the Libre Alliance to respect Hondurans' rights to the freedom of the press and called for an end to the violence its leaders have instigated.



Honduran President Urges Libre Alliance to Respect Freedom of Press, Join National Dialogue

The Honduran Journalists Association, or CPH, has "received serious complaints from directors, editors and media reporters, who are the target of a campaign of threats and hatred through certain portals of dubious authorships and in social networks," according to CPH President Dagoberto Rodríguez. CPH says that it is working to identify the perpetrators of these threats and take legal action against them.

"Manuel Zelaya, the Alliance's coordinator, did nothing when a broadcast journalist almost got lynched at a press conference called by [the Alliance] themselves," Rodríguez said.

"There is no place for violence against journalists in Honduras, whether online or in the streets," President Hernández said. "This cannot continue."

Members of the business and religious communities have also joined President Hernández in calling for peace. Yesterday, Angel Garachana, the President of the Episcopal Conference of Honduras and Bishop of San Pedro Sula, called on defeated Libre Alliance presidential candidate Salvador Nasralla to accept President Hernández's invitation to dialogue.

"To refuse the dialogue between them, would be a lack of seriousness, a lack of a genuine desire to find a way out and think about the good of Honduras," Garachana said. "Violence does not benefit anyone and blockades do not favor the development of the nation."

The impact of the recent spate of violence "is quite large," Secretary of Economic Development Arnaldo Castillo said. Since November, the protests in Honduras have cost the tourism industry \$100 million.

Looting and vandalism during the protests forced many businesses to close. The loss of sales could amount to 10 billion lempiras, or about \$422 million, according to Rafael Medina, the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tegucigalpa.

"We request that the Honduran population and property, both public and private, be protected as they are part of the rights of all citizens," said Medina.

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## Honduran President Thanks OAS for Supporting Honduran Democracy

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**Republic of Honduras** →  
17:24 ET

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras, Jan. 23, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández thanked the Organization of American States for its statement in support of Honduras's democratic institutions.

"Honduras's democracy is thriving," President Hernández said. "Over the next four years, my administration will continue working with the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and our neighbors to further strengthen democratic institutions in Honduras and across the region."



Honduran President thanks OAS for supporting Honduran democracy

In a statement yesterday, the Organization of American States said that it "expresses its firm intention to work in the future with the elected authorities of Honduras, at their three levels, executive, legislative and municipal, within the framework of existing cooperation agreements, institutional strengthening and electoral reform that will allow for democratic, just and supportive coexistence."

President Hernández also said that his administration is continuing its national dialogue with the "political, social, and economic sectors of the country to establish a climate of security, peace and democratic spirit that allows each Honduran to pursue liberty."

The Hernández administration has taken several steps to advance democracy in Honduras and spur economic growth: Last week, President Hernández appointed Karla Cuevas as the first Secretary of the newly created Ministry of Human Rights. Cuevas will lead the newly created Ministry for Human Rights, which will work to protect human rights defenders, journalists, and justice officials in Honduras.

Earlier this month, the President also announced that he's asking the Honduran National Congress to pass a bill that would provide more than 8 million lempiras -- more than \$339 million -- in low-interest business loans for Hondurans.

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