

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety

HONDURAS

Donny Reyes (m), treasurer of LGBT rights group "Asociación Arcoiris" (Rainbow Association)

Other members of Asociación Arcoiris

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LGBT rights activist Donny Reyes was reportedly arbitrarily detained by police in the Comayagüela district of the capital, Tegucigalpa, on 18 March. The officers beat him and then took him to a police station where they left him in a cell for six and a half hours, where other detainees repeatedly raped and beat him, allegedly encouraged by a police officer. Donny Reyes has lodged a formal complaint about this. Since then police appear to have attempted to intimidate him. Amnesty International believes that he, and other members of the organisation he heads, may be in grave danger.

Donny Reyes is the treasurer of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights group *Asociación Lésbico, Gay, Travesti y Bisexual Arcoiris*, which was set up in 2003. The group's objective is to train human rights defenders and promote HIV/AIDS prevention. On 18 March at about 3am he had walked out of the Arcoiris offices to stand with a colleague while she waited for a taxi. A few moments later, six police officers in two police cars stopped next to them and asked them for ID. His colleague had none with her, but the police officers were only interested in Donny Reyes. He showed them his ID card but they told him to get into the car. He refused and began to argue, pointing out that he had done nothing wrong. After a few moments they allegedly began beating him and forced him to get into the car. They abused him, saying, among other things, *a estos maricones hay que desaparecerlos de aquí* ("we have to disappear these queers from here").

Upon arrival at Comayagüela's Police Station, Donny Reyes was put in a cell with 57 men, most of whom had been arrested hours earlier. A police officer allegedly shouted to them *Miren, aquí les traigo a una princesita, ya saben lo que tienen que hacer* ("Look, I'm bringing you a little princess, you know what to do"). Donny was then beaten, stripped and raped by four men, allegedly members of street gangs.

At around 10.30am those who could pay a bribe of 200 lempiras (approximately US\$10) were told to move into a courtyard, which gave onto the street, to be released. Donny consented to pay the bribe and while waiting for his belongings, the police officer guarding him left, so Donny ran away. Three days later he reported what had happened to the Public Prosecutor's Office and to a senior police officer. He has also undergone medical forensic examinations to record the violence he had suffered.

Since 27 March police cars have parked several times a day, for around five minutes each time, in front of Arcoiris's offices in an apparent attempt to prevent Donny Reyes from pursuing his complaint.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Police raided Arcoiris's offices on 12 June and 1 July 2006, taking documents and destroying computers and furniture, though nothing valuable was stolen. Between the two raids, the then Director of Arcoiris, José Richard Figueroa, was assaulted in the street. He left Honduras in December and is seeking asylum in Spain. No one has been brought to justice. In October 2006 Arcoiris applied to the Ministry of Interior for official NGO status. A decision is pending.

According to local NGOs, some 200 LGBT people were murdered in Honduras between 1991 and 2003. Few of these killings have been officially registered as hate crimes; fewer still have been investigated or had those responsible brought to justice.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Arcoiris's members; in particular, Donny Reyes, who was arbitrarily detained by police on 18 March and allegedly raped by other detainees at the instigation of a police officer;
- urging the authorities to carry out a full and prompt investigation, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the rights of LGBT people are protected and that they are not subjected to discrimination on account of their sexual orientation or gender identity;
- calling on the authorities to publicly condemn any human rights violations committed against the LGBT community, making it clear that such actions are totally unacceptable and will always be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted;

**APPEALS TO:**

Public Security Minister

Álvaro Romero

Minister of Public Security, Ministry of Public Security  
Edificio Pujol, 4to. Piso, Col. Palmira (Blvd. Morazán), Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: +504 220 4352**

**Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimado Sr. Ministro**

Attorney General

Leonidas Rosa Bautista

Fiscal General del Estado, Ministerio Público, Lomas del Guijarro, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: +504 221 5667**

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Estimado Sr. Fiscal General**

**COPIES TO:**

Foreign Minister

Milton Jiménez Puerto

Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

Colonia Miraflores, Boulevard de las Fuerzas Armadas

Contiguo al Palacio de Justicia, Edificio Antigua Casa Presidencial, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: +504 234 1484**

Head of the Police

Comisionado Salomón Escoto Salinas

Jefe de la Policía Nacional Preventiva, Apartado Postal 3159, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Fax: +504 237 9070**

National Human Rights Commission

Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos de Honduras

Colonia Florencia Norte, Boulevard Suyapa, Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS

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Asociación Arcoiris

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and to diplomatic representatives of Honduras accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 May 2007.