Hondurans will go to the polls on Sunday, November 24, 2013 to elect a new president in a context marred by high levels of violence and violations of human rights—a situation that disproportionally affects women and women human rights defenders. Since the coup d’état in 2009:

- **Homicide rates have doubled** from 4,473 in 2008 to 7,172 in 2012 and femicides have risen by 200%.
- **At least 9 women human rights defenders have been murdered** in Honduras (all cases remain in impunity); 119 attacks against women defenders were registered in 2012.

For the first time in Honduras nine political parties will participate in elections, eight of which will present presidential candidates, of which there is one woman. Although four years have passed since the coup d’état, social and political polarization continues and is exacerbated by the governments participation in widespread violations of human rights. In this context, women face intimidation, harassment and a serious risk of violence, especially in politically contested areas and against women defenders that are denouncing electoral violations. Such risks generate the kind of fear that silences and reduces women’s participation and activism to the detriment of democracy.

In response, JASS (Just Associates), Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Centro de Estudios de la Mujer, National Women Human Rights Defenders Network, Red Lésbica Cattrachas, Foro de Mujeres por la Vida, CESADEH, Mesoamerican Women Human Rights Defenders Initiative and Confluencia Feminista Las Petateras have come together to launch a process that will monitor and make visible women’s participation, rights and activism before, during and after the electoral process. This observation mission will include 55 women defenders from Honduras and from around the world that will travel to and remain vigilant in different areas of the country where women activists and leaders face higher risks of violence due to their outspoken demands for justice and change. The team has set up multiple centers of documentation and a registry process to help document and analyze complaints filed by women throughout the country.

From November 20-26, JASS and allies will be collecting and disseminating information through statements, articles and news updates—available on social media—to inform the general public in Honduras and around the world of the role of women and of possible violence during the elections.

If you are interested in participating virtually or would like to receive information about the observation process, please contact JASS’ staff in Honduras and the U.S.: Daysi Flores, floresday.jass@gmail.com; Laura Carlsen, lecarlsen@gmail.com; Natalia Escrucería, natalia@justassociates.org.

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2 Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Honduras
3 Mesoamerican Women Human Rights Defenders Initiative (currently coordinated by JASS).