

8 July 2018

Honduras: LGBTI+ human rights defender Bessy Ferrera murdered

On 7 July 2019, LGTBI+ human rights defender **Bessy Ferrera** was shot to death by unidentified men while she was working in one of the streets of Comayagüela, close to the capital, Tegucigalpa.

Bessy Ferrera was a transgender and sex rights defender and member of [Arcoiris](#), an organisation that provides support to LGBTI+ persons who are victims of violence, works on awareness initiatives, promotes HIV prevention programmes, and lobbies the Honduran government to advance LGBTI+ rights in the country. Bessy Ferrera was named as a focal point by Arcoiris association within the Right Here, Right Now (*Derechos aquí y Ahora*) Platform of Honduras.

On the night of 7 July 2019, while Bessy was working in the streets of Comayagüela, two unidentified men approached her in a car with dark windows and shot her multiple times, killing her instantly. During the attack, another coworker was injured by gunshots and taken to the Hospital Escuela Universitario, where she is currently receiving medical attention. Two men have been detained so far in relation to the attack.

This is not the first time that [attacks against transgender sex workers](#) occur in Honduras, where the LGBTI+ community are frequently targeted, following a pattern of extreme cruelty and intimidation. Furthermore, threats and assassination attempts against the members of Arcoiris [have not been taken seriously by the authorities in the past](#), sending a message of impunity to perpetrators.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the killing of Bessy Ferrera and expresses its deep concern at the climate of [extreme violence](#) that members of LGBTI+ community are facing in Honduras. Front Line Defenders is especially concerned at the harassment, assault, and assassination attempts against organizations that promote LGBTI+ rights like Arcoiris suffer for their legitimate work in human rights, as some of their members have had to flee the country as a result of death threats against them and have been granted protective security measures from the Inter-American Commission.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Honduras to:

1. Strongly condemn the murder of Bessy Ferrera;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the murder of Bessy Ferrera, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
3. Take all necessary measures, in consultation with the human rights defenders or their representatives, to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of the witnesses of the attack against Bessy Ferrera;

4. Take all necessary measures, in consultation with the human rights defenders or their representatives, to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of the members of Asociación LGTB Arcoíris;
5. Guarantee in all circumstances that LGBTI+ human rights defenders in Honduras are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.