

# HONDURAS

## National TPS Alliance Fact Sheet

Today there are approximately 87,000 Honduran nationals living and working in the United States with TPS. Honduras was first designated for TPS in 1999 after Hurricane Mitch devastated the country and "substantially disrupted living conditions."\* According to the United Nations, Hurricane Mitch set Honduras' economic and social development back 20 years.\*\* Since then, it's TPS designation has been renewed 14 times. As recently as May 2016, the U.S. government determined that the living conditions continued to be disrupted from Hurricane Mitch and subsequent disasters.\*\*\

### WHY DOES HONDURAS STILL NEED TPS?

About 20 natural disasters have pummeled Honduras since Hurricane Mitch



<b>2005: Hurricane Beta</b> forced 125,000 people to evacuate, destroyed 954 homes & caused \$9 mil USD in damage	<b>2007: Tropical Storm Felix</b> forced 20,000 Hondurans to evacuate, killed 3 people, & caused significant flooding, infrastructure damage, & water contamination	<b>2009: An earthquake</b> killed 7 Hondurans, injured 40 more, & damaged 130 buildings	<b>2013: Tropical Storm Barry</b> affected 300 people, injured 4 people, & damaged 151 homes
<b>2005: Tropical Storm Gamma</b> killed 34 people, forced 30,000 people to evacuate, destroyed 2,000 homes, & damaged \$13-18 mil USD in banana crop	<b>2008: Dangerous floods</b> killed 34 people, forced 40,000 people out of their homes, & affected 250,000 people	<b>2011: Tropical Depression Twelve-E</b> killed 9 people & caused thousands of Hondurans to evacuate	<b>2015: Heavy rainfall</b> caused severe <b>flooding</b> , which killed 8 people & left thousands homeless

## **Corrupt, Illegitimate Governments that the U.S. supports Politically and Militarily**

The U.S. has exerted a tremendous amount of influence over Honduran politics since the 1800s. In the 1980s, the U.S.-backed Honduran Army kidnapped, tortured, and murdered hundreds of its political opponents. Battalion 316, was the most brazen and infamous of these units. Its members were trained by U.S. Army and CIA officials.<sup>^</sup>

In June 2009, the Honduran military forced the democratically-elected President Manuel Zelaya out of Honduras in a military coup. Elections were held under marshal law in November of 2009, and the vote totals were vastly inflated by electoral authorities in an effort to grant legitimacy to the process. The vast majority of nations refused to recognize the purported winner, Pepe Lobo of the National Party of Honduras. In the months after the coup and elections, then secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the U.S. diplomatic apparatus pressured other countries to recognize the Lobo government, while quickly moving to increase security aid to Honduras despite the coup d'état and widespread human rights violations.<sup>^^</sup>

Since the 2009 coup, and to the present day, human rights abuses have soared. At least 120 Honduran environmental activists, such as Berta Cáceres, have been murdered. Many of the murders are linked to the country's U.S.- trained security forces.<sup>^^^</sup> Further, 229 LGBT people have been killed. The economy has also suffered as education, social services, and wages have been gutted.<sup>^^</sup>

In November of 2013, Juan Orlando Hernandez of the National Party was declared the winner of disputed elections. Fraud was once again alleged by the opposition.<sup>^^^</sup> Despite being barred from running for re-election by the Honduran constitution, Hernandez maneuvered to have his hand-picked Supreme Court overturn the ban so he could run again in 2017. In November of 2017, the Hernandez controlled Electoral Tribunal inexplicably stopped the counting when it appeared that the Opposition candidate, Salvador Nasralla, was holding an insurmountable lead. When the tribunal began counting again two days later, Hernandez was in the lead and eventually declared the winner. Widespread allegations of fraud ensued, with security forces killing over 40 peaceful protestors in the unrest that continues to this day. The U.S. has nonetheless recognized the results of the fraudulent elections, further perpetuating the cycle of corruption, state violence, and forced migration.

Although a supposedly strong U.S. ally in the Drug War, top military, administration, and congressional officials have consistently been implicated in drug-trafficking, with allegations reaching Pepe Lobo, his son, and many of those closest to Juan Orlando Hernandez.

\* Federal Register, Jan. 5, 1999    ^ <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/06/05/magazine/testifying-to-torture.html?pagewanted=all>

\*\* Federal Register, May 16, 2016    ^^ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/31/hillary-clinton-honduras-violence-manuel-zelaya-berta-caceres>

^^^ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/28/berta-caceres-honduras-military-intelligence-us-trained-special-forces>