COVID-19 has begun to drastically affect life in Latin America. While government restrictions are essential to save lives, measures must protect, not harm, citizens. No one should live in fear of abuse or neglect by their governments, the very institutions sworn to protect them—but this is happening in some Latin American countries.

**El Salvador**

The national stay-at-home order in El Salvador is being enforced by the military, and some of those accused of violating it are arbitrarily detained and confined in quarantine centers. The Supreme Court declared President Bukele’s COVID-19 containment measures to be unconstitutional. In spite of this ruling, Bukele ordered security forces to continue arbitrarily detaining anyone violating his lockdown order.

**Honduras**

In Honduras, 76% of the population that work outside of the agricultural industry belong to the informal sector and many can’t afford to abide by lockdown measures. Efforts to relieve some of this pressure through handouts of food are undercut by government corruption. The Alvarado brothers, for example, defied lockdown measures to sell bread only to be shot by the military police, leaving one of them dead.

**Ecuador**

Though one of South America’s smallest countries, Ecuador has the fourth highest number of COVID-19 deaths in the region. Human rights organizations fear the pandemic will devastate Ecuador’s indigenous groups, which they say have been neglected by the country’s health ministry. Despite confirming cases of COVID-19, indigenous communities been slow to receive tests and medical supplies.

**Brazil**

As of June 18, Brazil has reported 46,842 COVID-19 deaths, making it the hardest hit country in the world after the United States. President Bolsonaro fired his health minister over disagreements on the country’s coronavirus strategy, and the most recent one quit after four weeks. Bolsonaro has called social distancing useless and participated in two “anti-lockdown” protests outside the presidential palace in Brasilia, even as Brazil was predicted to be the new epicenter of the virus.