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**Subject: Representing informal economy workers is not an act of terrorism!**

**We, StreetNet International, a Global Alliance of membership-based organizations of informal traders from more than 52 countries, demand a full investigation of the arrest of informal economy workers' representative Comrade Johnny Douglas Rivera and his immediate release.**

**To the President of El Salvador Nayib Bukele**

Last weekend, Johnny Douglas Rivera, the Organization Secretary of the **Trade Union Federation of Independent Workers and Vendors of El Salvador (FESTIVES)**, an affiliate organization of [StreetNet International](http://www.streetnet.org.za), was arrested by the Civil National Police authorities in El Salvador, amid the state of emergency declared to contain gang violence in the country.

On March 28, 2022, the Parliament of El Salvador approved a State of Emergency that suspended constitutional protections in response to the [62 homicides attributed to gang killings](#) and, according to the Salvadoran Congressional President, aiming to “protect the lives of Salvadorans” and “confront criminality”.

Comrade Johnny Douglas Rivera was arrested under the pretense of "illicit associations" without any due legal process and his comrades and family remain without any information about his detention. In addition, comrade Johnny Douglas Rivera has a serious heart condition, having already suffered two heart attacks, that demands permanent medical attention. StreetNet International, as a global alliance of organizations of informal traders, **joins our affiliate organization FESTIVES in demanding a full investigation of the arrest of Johnny Douglas Rivera and his immediate release.**

**It is incomprehensible how arresting a renowned trade union leader and defender of the rights of informal economy workers for allegedly “illicit associations” benefits the security of Salvadoran citizens.**

We reiterate that **informal economy workers are not criminals**, but hard-working people fighting for their human and labor rights, and are entitled to all due processes and legal protections as all other citizens of El Salvador.

**International Coordinator of StreetNet International**

**Oksana Abboud**

April 5th 2022

***International Council members***

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