

via fax: 011 505 266 1222  
 Sr. Presidente Daniel Ortega  
 President of Nicaragua

October 26, 2015

Dear President Ortega:

We urge your government to create peaceful solutions to the conflicts in the indigenous zones on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua. Much violence has broken out in recent months as the government moves forward with giving legal land title to several indigenous communities. Restoring historic lands to indigenous peoples is supported by CEJUDHCAN (Center for Justice and Human Rights of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua) and other human rights organizations.

CEJUDHCAN, other human rights organizations and indigenous communities have been calling on your government to implement Law no.445, to clear the indigenous territories of non-indigenous "settlers," many who purchased land illegally. The presence of outside "settlers" (as the indigenous refer to them) has been at the root of much of the violence in recent months. Communities in Esperanza, Santa Clara and Francia Sirpi have experienced at least five ambushes since June. Indigenous people have been seriously injured, kidnapped and killed. Last month there were more attacks, injuries and deaths:

- Sep 3 – community leader **Rosmeldo Solorzano** was killed, Erick Cunningham Zamora (CEJUDHCAN member) injured and Adoni Molina injured when settlers attacked Santa Clara
- Sep 14 – **Mario Leman Muller** died from injuries suffered after an intoxicated mob attacked the indigenous radio station in Wangki
- Sep 15- the Nicaraguan Army attacked a truck traveling with humanitarian aid from the Tasba Raya communities in Waspam Municipality and injured three persons: **Constantino Romel Frech** (Vice-President of the Indigenous Territorial Government of the Wangki Twi-Tasba Raya), **Obencio Downs Peralta** (President of the Youth Council of Wangki Twi-Tasba Raya) and **Rosman Flores Gonzales** (representative of the Elders' Council of Bilwi)
- Sep 18 – houses in a Wangki Twi-Tasba Raya were burned to the ground

This violence must stop. We therefore urge you to

- carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the killings of **Rosmeldo Solorzano** and **Mario Leman Muller**, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice
- carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the attacks on human rights defenders **Constantino Romel Frech, Obencio Downs Peralta, Rosman Flores Gonzales and Erick Cunningham Zamora**, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of indigenous leaders and the communities which they defend
- implement Law no. 445 and proceed granting land title to indigenous territories

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

copies: Laura Farnsworth Dogu, US Ambassador to Nicaragua ~ via fax 011-505--266-3861  
 Dana Deree , Nicaragua Desk, US State Dept ~ via email  
 Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Nicaragua, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458. 3650  
 Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458. 3650  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline 9/28/15\_Honduras

**The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter:**