

via fax: 011 504 2239 3298 Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández President of Honduras	via fax: 011 504 2221 5667 Sr. Oscar Chinchilla Banegas Attorney General of Honduras
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May 24, 2016

Dear Sirs:

We are absolutely dismayed that the Honduran Government did not notify the **family of Berta Cáceres** of the arrest of four men on May 2, allegedly connected with her murder in Intibucá on March 3 (cf our letter of March 7). The family learned of the arrests through news reports instead of through the proper protocol of homicide investigations in which authorities first notify victims' families of major case developments.

According to reports, two of the persons arrested, Sergio Ramón Rodríguez and Douglas Geovanny Bustillo, have ties with Desarrollos Energéticos SA (DESA), the Honduran company which was building the Agua Zarca dam that Berta and her organization, the Civic Council of Indigenous Organizations (COPINH), had strongly opposed. Berta successfully campaigned against the hydroelectric project, which was initiated without consent of the local indigenous communities or proper consultations with them. Sergio Ramón Rodríguez, is an engineer who works at the Agua Zarca dam. Douglas Geovanny Bustillo is a retired military officer and former head of the DESA's security unit. The other two men arrested, Mariano Díaz Chávez and Edison Atilio Duarte Meza, are, respectively, a former military officer and a member of the armed forces still on duty.

Family and friends of Berta question whether the recent arrests are the result of a complete and adequate investigation. They also want to know if the intellectual authors of the murder are among those arrested.

Berta Cáceres' family, friends and members of the international community have repeated their initial request calling on the Honduran government to allow the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to conduct an independent and transparent investigation into her murder. So far the government has sidestepped the request.

We are very aware of the history of impunity in Honduras. Too many human rights crimes go unpunished. Therefore, we **strongly urge** that the government immediately invite the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to do an independent investigation into the murder of Berta Cáceres.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai and Christine Stonebraker-Martinez
 Co-Coordinators

copies: Jorge Alberto Milla Reyes, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
 James Nealon, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037
 Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
 Francisco José Eguiguren Praeli, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Rapporteur for Honduras and for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline 5/4/16_Honduras

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