

IRTF

InterReligious Task Force on Central America

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via fax 011.504.234.6784
Magistrado Nicolás García Zorto
Supreme Court of Honduras

October 21, 2004

Dear Sir:

We are writing to urge you to immediately release Marcelino and Leonardo Miranda, community leaders of Montaña Verde in the municipality of Gracias, Department of Lempira, who are in prison under an unjust 25 year sentence. We have been following their case for two years and have written letters about it to the President of Honduras and other officials on May 21, 2003; November 1, 2003 and January 12, 2004. We are very aware of the many irregularities in due process and abuse of human rights that have occurred. These are all in the context of the struggle of the Civic Council of Grassroots and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) to achieve recognition of their indigenous territories and to obtain community land titles.

The Miranda brothers have been brutally beaten and dragged to Gracias prison where they have been tortured and kept jailed under fabricated charges. This use of the Honduran justice and penal systems as instruments of repression is absolutely unconscionable.

We expect to hear from you with news that the Miranda brothers have been released. Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

Copies: Mario M. Canahuati, Honduran Ambassador to U.S. ~ via fax 1-202-966-9751
COPINH ~ via fax 011-504-783-0817
Mr. Tom Kelly, Desk Officer for Honduras, US State Department ~ via fax: 1-202-647-2597
Ambassador Larry L. Palmer, US Embassy in Tegucigalpa ~ via fax: 011-504-236-9037

Rights Action10_04 Honduras

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