

Sandra Ponce

Fiscalía Especial de Derechos Humanos
Human Rights Unit of the Office of the Attorney General
Ministerio Publico
Edificio Lomas Plaza II - Lomas del Guijarro
Av. Republica Dominicana
Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS

January 25, 2012

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the recent treatment of **Florinda Rodriguez**, leader of La Aurora campesino settlement of the United Campesino Movement of Aguan (MUCA). On the morning of January 16 as she left her home in Tauijam, Tocoa Municipality, to go to La Confianza settlement, she was violently intercepted by armed men who put her in a green double cabin vehicle headed to the offices of the National Agrarian Institute (INA). They stopped at an intersection, beat her and threatened her with death if she did not give them information about campesino leaders at La Aurora. They told her they had her son tied up inside a bag in the back of the pick-up and that it would be best if she talked. They freed her under the threat that if she talked about the event, they would return and kill her.

This is the latest instance of the ongoing violence in the Aguan region (cf our letter of Oct. 23, 2011). We demand that you put a halt to the kidnappings, assassinations, harassments and threats that have become a way of life for the campesino settlements.

We urge you, as the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights, to have the responsible national authorities:

- investigate and punish in a timely manner all the crimes and other serious violations of human rights committed in the Lower Aguán, including the prosecution of the material and intellectual authors;
- immediately end the repression and violence against the campesino movement, in particular the forced evictions, and adopt effective methods to offer protection to persons at risk;
- regulate as is needed the functioning of the private security business, imposing on them the requirement to fully respect the human rights of the population or be subjected to cancellation of their permission to operate in the country;
- comply with the legal decisions and political agreements related to the agrarian conflicts, and implement the necessary measures to achieve a just and sustainable solution to the problem of land tenancy, in agreement with the obligations assumed by the State of Honduras for the Right to Alimentation.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai,
Coordinator

cc Pompeyo Bonilla, Minster of Security and Interior ~ via fax: 011.504.2221.1756
Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
Lisa Kubiske, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011.504.2236.9037
Nathan Anderson, Attache for Human Rights and Labor, US Embassy to Honduras ~ via email
Benjamin Gadan, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax 202-647-2597
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email
Dinah Shelton, Chair, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458-3992
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

1/17/12_HSN Honduras

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