

via fax: 011 504 2290 5088
Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández
President of Honduras

via fax: 011 504 2221 5667
Sr. Oscar Chinchilla Banegas
Attorney General of Honduras

November 15, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely saddened and outraged at the murder of community and campesino leader **Juan Ángel López Miralda** (also known as Juan Galindo), who was shot dead in the Rigores Community, Trujillo Municipality in Colón Department. On November 11 he was cycling home after leaving a meeting in a nearby church when two unknown individuals riding a motorcycle killed him with several bullets to his back.

Juan Ángel López Miralda was a campesino leader and, until the end of 2013, had been a member of the Unified Peasant Movement of Aguán (MUCA), an organization that defends campesinos' rights to land in the Aguán area. In November 2013 he reported to the human rights organization Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH) about two attempts on his life. One was in April 2013, when men wearing balaclavas tried to kill him. Another was in October 2013, just days after police officers had visited his father's home. In November 2013 he had to relocate abroad because of death threats, but he had recently returned home for family reasons.

This fatal incident follows the recent murder of another campesino leader, **Margarita Murillo** (cf our letter of September 13). Because we fear for the safety of the family of Juan Ángel López Miralda and of other leaders, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out a swift and independent investigation into the killing of Juan Ángel López Miralda, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- protect the family members of Juan Ángel López Miralda, in accordance with their wishes;
- adopt and fully implement a mechanism, in keeping with the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, that will protect those who are at risk of reprisals for their work.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: COFADEH ~ via email: mail@cofadeh.org
Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
James Nealon, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037
Mariana Grayson, Human Rights and Labor Attaché, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037
Kelsey Cambronne, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email CambronneKL@state.gov
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email JohnsonCD@state.gov
Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458.3992
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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