

via fax: 011 504 2239 3298 <b>Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández</b> President of Honduras	via fax: 011 504 2221 5667 <b>Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas</b> Attorney General of Honduras
Via fax: 011 504 2239 6182 <b>Sr. Abraham Alvarenga Urbina</b> Procurator General of Honduras	Via fax: 011 504 2231 0204 / 2231 0882 / 2235 7697 / 2235 3532 <b>Sr. Roberto Herrera Cáceres</b> National Commissioner of Human Rights

December 24, 2016

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the unauthorized appropriation of the logo, slogan and narrative of The Committee of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH).

A letter dated December 13, using COFADEH'S distinctive graphics and the name of their general coordinator, Bertha Oliva, was circulated to propose to Marlon Escoto, the Rector of the National Agricultural University (UNA), a negotiated solution to the conflict that has paralyzed activities at UNA for over a month. The false letter, which appears to be true (a "false positive"), cites direct communications between Oliva and Escoto that never occurred, and suggests that the political organization Los Necios (OPLN) function as a mediator for the reinstatement of dismissed students. The rationale of this "false positive" implies a politicization of the conflict because the leadership of the OPLN participates in the LIBRE party.

"False positives" against COFADEH occurred on November 14 when the website *Defensores de Honduras* (Defenders of Honduras), used characteristic COFADEH website graphics to attribute to COFADEH a cover-up of the authors of the murder of José Ángel Flores, president of the campesino organization MUCA (cf our letter of Nov 26).

Honduras has used the practice of "false positives" since January 2010 to justify State terrorism in the areas of organized crime, drug trafficking, anti-corruption and political espionage. The intent of this practice is to damage the work of the defense and promotion of human rights in Honduras and to create conditions for the physical elimination of social leaders.

On December 1, COFADEH participated along with other national and international organizations in a hearing at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in Panama, in which they urged authorities to take all measures necessary to avoid the illegitimate use of COFADEH symbols and characteristic graphics on the part of State agents or individuals acting with State acquiescence.

We **strongly urge** that you carry out an impartial and exhaustive investigation to identify the people involved in the campaign to construct "false positives," take them to trial before a competent and impartial court, and apply sanctions according to the law in order to assure application of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 9, 1998, in particular articles 1.5a and 12.2.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

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  
 Jose de Jesus Orozco Hernandez, Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3650  
 Francisco José Eguiguren Praeli, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

12/15/16 COFADEH\_Honduras

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