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<p>via email: <a href="mailto:observatorio@sdhjgd.gob.hn">observatorio@sdhjgd.gob.hn</a>  <b>Sr. Héctor Leonel Ayala</b>          Secretary of State for the Offices of Justice,          Human Rights, Governance and Decentralization</p>	<p>via email: <a href="mailto:central@conadeh.hn">central@conadeh.hn</a>  <b>Dr. Roberto Herrera Cáceres</b>          National Commissioner for Human Rights</p>

May 24, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are deeply concerned about the continued violence and criminalization of the peaceful resistance to the Los Planes hydroelectric dam being constructed by Hidrocep (Hidroeléctrica Centrales El Progreso), in Pajuiles, Atlántida Department. Since March 2017, Pajuiles and surrounding communities, with the support of the Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice (MADJ), have maintained an encampment to block Hidrocep from constructing the hydroelectric dam along the Mezapa River in the Gracias a Dios mountain range.

On March 8, the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) granted precautionary measures to the community of Pajuiles after MADJ and the Centre for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) filed a petition on behalf of MADJ. The IACHR ordered the government to investigate the violence being inflicted on those resisting the dam construction and to ensure communities' continued access to potable water.


On May 3 at dawn, a vehicle full of Honduran police officers showed up in front of the Encampment for Dignity, Life and Water in Pajuiles. Less than two hours later, the whole area was occupied by hundreds of police from various units, including the national police, the Police Investigations Directorate, and the elite US-trained and -funded COBRAS and TIGRES special forces. The TIGRES tried to clear the encampment by launching tear gas at the residents inside. The CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of Hidrocep, Jason Hawit, was present, entering and leaving the area guarded by the national police.

We are extremely concerned about the increasing threats and violence against MADJ, the communities involved with their cause, and their supporters (cf our letters of January 24, April 25). Since the disputed presidential election in November 2017, there has been a military and police raid on MADJ's headquarters, assaults on and surveillance of their members, and threats against Martín Fernández Guzmán, MADJ's General Coordinator. At least four members of MADJ have been murdered by state security forces and paramilitaries during the ongoing post-electoral crisis.

Because of these events, we **strongly urge** that you

- investigate the excessive use of force used by police units on residents of Pajuiles on May 3, and publish the results
- make a public statement against the use of militarized police forces to squash nonviolent civilian protest
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical security MADJ members, in strict accordance with their wishes

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Marlon R. Tábora Muñoz, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via website or fax, and US mail  
 US Embassy in Honduras: Heide B. Fulton, Chargé d'Affaires and Jason Smith, Human Rights and Labor Representative ~ via email  
 Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email  
 Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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