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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	via email: <a href="mailto:central@conadeh.hn">central@conadeh.hn</a> <b>Dr. Roberto Herrera Cáceres</b> National Commissioner for Human Rights

July 24, 2018

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about the increase in disease caused by contaminated water from the Mezapa River, resulting from the construction of the Hidrocep hydroelectric dam (Hidroeléctrica Centrales El Progreso), in Pajuiles, Atlántida Department. Residents are suffering strong stomach pains, spots on their skin, and rashes.


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. They have denounced to the local and national authorities the damage to their only source of water that supplies more than 20 communities. On several occasions, the vice minister of the government office My Environment, Elvis Rodas, has recognized the high levels of pollution in the river. But rather than order a suspension of work on the dam, he has reaffirmed his commitment to let Hidrocep finish construction.

On March 8, the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) granted precautionary measures to the community of Pajuiles, ordering the government to ensure the communities' continued access to potable water (cf our letter of May 24 2018). These protection measures also provided for the permanent presence of a doctor and supply of medicines at the Community Health Center. However, on the afternoon of July 6, the health center was closed; patients could no longer gain access to urgent care. In response, MADJ brought in a team of doctors to provide free care to those affected.

We strongly urge that you:

- halt construction of the Hidrocep hydroelectric dam
- comply with the IACHR precautionary measures granted to the community of Pajuiles on March 8, 2018 that orders the government to investigate the violence being waged against those resisting dam construction and to ensure communities' access to potable water
- provide regular, ongoing medical care professionals to diagnose and treat people suffering from the harmful health effects of water contamination

Sincerely,

  
 Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
 Co-Coordinator

  
 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

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 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

MADJ\_7/11/2018\_HONDURAS

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