

via email: diseloalpresidente@presidencia.gob.hn , info@presidencia.gob.hn Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández President of Honduras	via email: ngosorto@gmail.com mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com , Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas Attorney General of Honduras
via email: karlacueva144@gmail.com Lica. Karla Cueva Secretary for Human Rights	via email: presidencia@poderjudicial.gob.hn Lic. Rolando Argueta President of the Supreme Court of Justice

October 23, 2018

Dear Sirs and Madame:

We are gravely concerned over the eviction order for the environmental defense organization **Encampment for Life** and the issuing of arrest warrants for 18 of its members in Tocoa, Colón Department. We are also concerned about an attack by security agents of a mining company which left Encampment member **Rigoberto Hernández López** injured from a bullet wound.


Residents of the community of El Guapinol in Tocoa organized the Encampment more than two months ago. They have identified several environmental, social, human, and economic impacts of large scale mining projects in the Atlantic zone carried out by the Los Pinares mining company. Of particular concern are the impacts on the Carlos Escaleras Mejía National Park. They have documented how Los Pinares is destroying animal life and contaminating small rivers (water sources for 13 communities) that empty into the Río Aguán; this puts 90,000 inhabitants at risk of losing their agricultural crops and homes.

A court in San Pedro Sula recently issued an order (file No. 148-2018) to criminalize environmental and territorial rights defenders by using a law that was designed to prosecute members of highly dangerous crimes, such as those committed by gangs and other organized crime. Among those criminalized are **Juan López**, (Committee Pro-Defense for the Common Good), **Reinaldo Domínguez**, **Juana Esquivel** (Foundation San Alonso Rodríguez), **Orbin Hernández**, **Carlos Leonel George** (Coordination of Popular Organizations of the Aguán, who is beneficiary of IACHR Protective Measure MC-5014), **Miriam Yaneth Mejía Cruz**, **Lourdes Elizabeth Gómez Rosas**, and several others.

We **strongly urge that** you

- take immediate measures to investigate the attack that injured **Rigoberto Hernández López**, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- protect members of the Encampment for Life in El Guapinol, in strict accordance with their wishes
- exhort judicial authorities to consider international standards of due process and to not utilize the courts to improperly intimidate, stigmatize, and restrict the freedom of expression and the right to make social demands.

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinators


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Marlon R. Tábora Muñoz, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via website or fax, and US mail
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 Jason Smith, Human Rights and Labor Representative, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via email
 Olivia Franken, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email
 Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras ~ via email
 María Soledad Pazo, Country Representative to Honduras, United Nations Office High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email
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 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, 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:

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