

via email: <a href="mailto:presidencia@poderjudicial.gob.hn">presidencia@poderjudicial.gob.hn</a> <b>Lic. Rolando Argueta</b> President of the Supreme Court of Honduras	via email: <a href="mailto:mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com">mprelacionespublicas@gmail.com</a> , <b>Sr. Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas</b> Attorney General of Honduras
via email: <a href="mailto:jacobsantos2004@yahoo.com">jacobsantos2004@yahoo.com</a> <b>Lic. Jacobo Santos</b> Special Prosecutor for Human Rights	via email: <a href="mailto:karlacueva144@gmail.com">karlacueva144@gmail.com</a> <b>Lica. Karla Cueva</b> Secretary of State for Human Rights Affairs

November 23, 2018

Dear Sirs and Madam:

We are horrified by the physical attacks on journalists who were covering the eviction of more than 350 persons from the Encampment for Life in the community of El Guapinol, Tocoa in Colón Department. The eight journalists are **Rigoberto Mendoza, Osmán Corea, Vitalino Álvarez** and **Erick Mendoza** (Comunicaciones Mendoza); **Jhony Castillo** (Canal 5), **Wenceslao Canales** (Canal 29); **Donaldo Domínguez** and **César Obando** (Radio Progreso); and **Miguel Dubón** (Radio Globo).

On October 27 police and soldiers insulted the journalists, used physical violence against them, fired tear gas, and confiscated and destroyed equipment. Rigoberto Mendoza was hit in the stomach with stones while he was filming. He has also criticized a claim by a member of the National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH) that the eviction was peaceful. As a result he fears for his life because he is being followed and watched, and receives threats daily.


Residents of the community of El Guapinol organized the Encampment in August of this year. 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 (cf our letters of October 23 and November 11). On numerous occasions, the company offered the journalists 4,000 lempiras (about 150 euros) not to cover its activities.

We condemn this extremely serious obstruction of the right to inform.

Because we know these reporters are still in great danger, **we strongly urge that you**

- identify the perpetrators of the violent attacks described above, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- review the laws passed in the context of the 2009 military coup d'état restricting the rights of people and assigning rights to private companies to carry out extractive projects based on a non-existent legality that dispossess communities and peoples of their territories.

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

  
Christine Stonebraker-Martínez

copies: Marlon R. Tábor Muñoz, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via website or fax, and US mail  
Heide B. Fulton, Chargé d'Affaires, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via email  
Jason Smith, Human Rights and Labor Representative, US Embassy in Honduras ~ via email  
David Tagle, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email  
Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email  
Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email  
Maria Soledad Pazo, Country Representative to Honduras, United Nations Office High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email  
US Senators Brown & Portman  
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:**