

<b>Óscar Fernando Chinchilla Banegas</b> Attorney General of Honduras mpelacionespublicas@gmail.com, gosorto@gmail.com	<b>Lica. Karla Cueva</b> Secretary of State for Human Rights Affairs karlacueva144@gmail.com
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September 12, 2021

Dear Attorney General Chinchilla and Secretary Cueva:

We are outraged to learn of another **forced eviction of 44 families from the campesino communities “Hombres y mujeres de fe”** (Men and Women of Faith) and **“Unidos al campo”** (United to the Field) in the Cañada de Flores sector of Guaimaca municipality in Francisco Morazán Department.

On August 18 in the afternoon, armed men (some wearing hoods) arrived in the community and, without presenting a legal eviction order, carried out a forced eviction. They kicked the doors of houses, entered some of the homes, and fired shots into the air to intimidate the families. It is understood that the armed men were private security guards of Maximiliano Elvir, who has been disputing ownership of the 391 blocks of land since 2014. Video footage uploaded to Facebook shows the destruction of families’ homes. Families, fearing for their lives, were forced to flee and hide.

The lands that these families inhabit have been designated as communal (*ejido*) and were settled by the campesino families starting in 2009. The families farm the land for subsistence purposes only (growing food, raising animals). We wrote to you on February 13 about a similar incident of forced eviction of these same families. After that incident, the National Central of Rural Workers (CNTC) initiated an investigation and pursued legal proceedings to repair the damages caused to the families’ property and the attempted denial of their right to provide for themselves an adequate means of subsistence.

We have not received a response from your government about the incident in February. Once again, we **strongly urge** that you

- investigate the violence waged against the families in Cañada de Flores on August 18, publish the results, and bring the perpetrators to justice
- instruct INA (Instituto Nacional Agrario) to investigate the legal titles of these disputed lands to establish true ownership/possession and make accommodations for the 44 families.
- safeguard the life and security of all citizens of Honduras through the execution of a comprehensive and inclusive agrarian policy that protects the most vulnerable

Sincerely,



Brian J. Stefan Szittai

and



Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

Co-Coordinator

copies: Blanca Sarai Izaguirre Lozano, National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras (CONADEH) ~ via email  
 Luis Suazo Barahona, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via email and US mail  
 Joel Hernández, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email and US mail  
 Isabel Albaladejo Escribano, Representative to Honduras of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH) ~ via email  
 US Embassy in Honduras: Colleen Hoey, Chargé d’Affaires; Nate Rettenmayer, Political Officer; Ariel Jahner, Human Rights Officer ~ via email  
 US State Department in Washington, DC: Molly Runyon, Desk Officer for Honduras ~ via email  
 US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email  
 US Representatives Beatty, Gibbs, González, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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