

Lic. Rolando Edgardo Argueta Pérez
 President of the Supreme Court of Justice
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
presidencia@poderjudicial.gob.hn

December 15, 2021

Dear Supreme Court President Argueta:

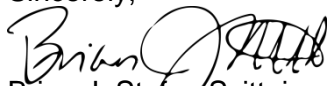
We are concerned about threatened evictions of hundreds of campesino families in three departments across the country. Several private interests, among them the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP), the Dinant Corporation, and the Agropalma company, have persuaded judges Jorge Omar Pérez Pineda of Francisco Morazán, Carlos Irías de León of San Pedro Sula (Cortés Department) and Víctor Meléndez of the municipal court in Trujillo (Colón Department) to issue eviction orders against several peasant cooperatives. Among the influential players in these illegal eviction orders are the Facusse, Canales and Morales families.

The families of the campesino cooperatives San Isidro, Trinidad, Despertar, Remolino, Camarones, Laureles, Tranvio, Paso Aguán and Plantel are facing imminent threat of eviction, even though the cooperatives are in possession of definitive titles that the National Agrarian Institute (INA) maintains in its archives. Although these cooperatives have filed numerous complaints with the government for the crime of usurpation against Dinant, Agropalma and Ceibeña investments for many year, the investigations have never advanced.

We strongly urge that you act swiftly to prevent any acts of violence against the campesino families who are making use of their legitimate right to access these lands:

- instruct Judge Victor Meléndez (Trujillo) to act with transparency and legality and to show that there has been no collusion between the court and Ceibeña Investments as reflected in file 149-2021 that criminalizes the land defenders.
- instruct Judge Victor Meléndez (Trujillo) to withdraw from Francis Reyes, a retired army colonel and current head of security for Inversiones Ceibeña, the designation of executing judge for the eviction orders against the Remolino cooperative
- instruct the MP (Ministerio Público) to order an investigation of the aforementioned judges and prosecutors for corruption, influence peddling, bribery and human rights violations.
- ensure that the National System of Protection guarantees the physical and psychological integrity of the 123 beneficiaries of IACHR protective measure No.MC50-14
- hold responsible Police Deputy Commissioner Carlos Ramon Gonzales, who is in charge implementing police protection measures for the beneficiaries of MC50-14, as well as the head of Operation Xatruch III, Colonel Rodríguez

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinator


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Blanca Sarai Izaguirre Lozano, National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) ~ via email
 Rosa Seaman, Viceministra de Protección de la Secretaría de Derechos Humanos (SEDH) ~ via email
 Luis Suazo Barahona, Ambassador of Honduras to the US ~ via email and US mail
 Joel Hernández García, 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
 Alice Shackelford, UN Resident Coordinator in Honduras, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ~ via email
 Plataforma Agraria ~ 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: Molly Runyon, Honduras Desk Officer ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Brown, Gibbs, González, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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