

<p>Blanca Sarahí Izaguirre Lozano National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras (CONADEH)</p>	<p>Rosa Seaman Vice-Minister for Protection Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH)</p>
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December 16, 2021

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre and Vice-Minister Seaman:

Yesterday we wrote to Lic. Rolando Edgardo Argueta, President of the Supreme Court, to use his judicial authority to stop the 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.

We learned today that those evictions have commenced.


Today a court ordered the **eviction of the San Isidro Campesino Cooperative in Tocoa**, Colón Department. Around 150 policemen evicted 80 families from the cooperative. According to information from the Coordinadora de Organizaciones Populares del Aguan (COPA), the court has issued eviction orders until December 21, evicting one cooperative per day.

This is an illegal eviction that benefits wealthy private landowners and extractive companies in Honduras. In 2012, the San Isidro Cooperative recovered their lands after an arduous legal process. Tragically, after the ruling in their favor, the lawyer and legal representative of the struggle, Antonio Trejo, was assassinated, which has allowed for the manipulation of the justice system and the eviction of families. In 2019, a first eviction was carried out in a context of extreme violence. Yesterday, the San Isidro Cooperative tried to stop this eviction by presenting an appeal in the national jurisdiction court of Francisco Morazán. Although the appeal was accepted, two hours later the judge ordered the eviction of the community.

We 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:

- work with the MP (Ministerio Público) to order an investigation of the aforementioned judges and prosecutors for corruption, influence peddling, bribery and human rights violations.
- investigate all judges who are issuing eviction orders as to whether there has been collusion between the court and private economic interests
- ensure that the National System of Protection guarantees the physical and psychological integrity of all campesino families facing eviction, especially those in the Bajo Aguán who are the 123 beneficiaries of IACHR protective measure No.MC50-14

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-Coordinators


 Christine Stonebraker-Martinez

copies: Lic. Rolando Edgardo Argueta Pérez, President of the Supreme Court of Justice ~ 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

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