

Blanca Saraí Izaguirre Lozano
National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH)
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

October 15, 2025

Dear Commissioner Izaguirre Lozano:

We are writing to express deep concern over the ongoing violence and terror being inflicted on peasant farming families in the Bajo Aguán Valley, particularly those of the **Los Camarones Agricultural Cooperative** in Tocoa, Colón Department.

Since December 24, 2024, the armed criminal group known as Banda Los Cachos has illegally occupied farmland legally titled to the Camarones Cooperative. The occupation forcibly displaced approximately 150 families and created a humanitarian emergency. Despite a judge's order for the eviction of Los Cachos, Honduran authorities have twice deferred its execution. Meanwhile, the armed group continues to terrorize nearby cooperatives, including El Chile and El Tranvío, threatening further displacement and violence.

On several occasions, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and the Agrarian Platform of the Aguán have urged the State of Honduras to guarantee protection for peasant families and human rights defenders in the region. However, attacks, intimidation, and impunity persist.

Land conflicts in Bajo Aguán have persisted for decades as large agribusiness interests—especially Corporación Dinant—have expanded palm oil plantations onto land claimed by peasant cooperatives. Although President Xiomara Castro's government pledged to address these disputes in 2022, violence has escalated once again, leaving multiple deaths and ongoing forced displacements. The failure to enforce judicial orders and guarantee protection emboldens those who profit from violence and lawlessness.

We strongly urge that you:

- (1) enforce without further delay the judicial eviction order against the criminal group Los Cachos, ensuring the safe return of the Camarones Cooperative families to their rightful land
- (2) guarantee the protection—before, during, and after the eviction—of all members of the Los Camarones, El Chile, and El Tranvío farming cooperatives, as well as leaders of the Agrarian Platform and COPA (Coordinadora de Organizaciones Campesinas del Aguán) who have been threatened for their advocacy
- (3) investigate and prosecute those responsible for acts of forced displacement, intimidation, and violence in the Bajo Aguán, including any collusion between state security forces, criminal groups, and private agribusiness interests

We urge the Honduran government to uphold its international human rights obligations and take swift action to restore peace and justice for the campesino families of the Bajo Aguán.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-coordinator

copies: UMVIBA: La Unidad Especializada para la Investigación de Muertes Violentas del Bajo Aguán/ Specialized Unit for the Investigation of Violent Deaths in the Lower Aguán ~ via email
Javier Efraín Bú Soto, Ambassador of Honduras in Washington, DC ~ via email and US mail
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR): Andrea Pochak (Rapporteur for Honduras) ~ via email
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH): Isabel Albaladejo Escribano (Representative to Honduras), Alice Shackelford (UN Resident Coordinator in Honduras) ~ via email
US State Department: Honduras Desk Officer (Washington, DC) ~ via email
US Embassy in Tegucigalpa: Roy Perrin (Chargé d'Affaires ad interim) and Human Rights Officer ~ via email
US Congress: Senators from Ohio (Husted and Moreno) and US Representatives from Ohio (Beatty, Brown, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Miller, Rulli, Sykes) ~ via email

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