



InterReligious Task Force on Central America

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Maria Otero  
Under Secretary of State  
Democracy and Global Affairs  
US Department of State  
2201 C St NW  
Washington DC 20520

November 16, 2010

Dear Under Secretary Otero:

We are extremely concerned about the violent attack on November 15 by 200 armed security guards against the peasant movement in the Aguan Valley of Honduras, leaving at least 5 persons dead and others gravely injured. The campesino movement in this region has been the target of multiple human rights violations in recent months, including at least 17 murders since the coup of June 2009, because of a land dispute between a palm oil grower and the local peasant community. On November 16 President Lobo's government announced that in response to the killings, it is sending military and police contingents to the area to conduct joint operations.

This response is highly alarming. Peasant and human rights groups in Honduras say it will only serve to escalate violence and lead to more killing. Human rights abuses committed by Honduran police and military have been widely documented and denounced by national and international human rights organizations. **We call on the State Department to urge President Lobo to halt police and military operations in the region.**

We also join 30 members of Congress, including Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Cleveland, who recently wrote to Secretary of State Clinton to call on the US government to suspend military and police aid to repressive forces in Honduras, which enjoy total impunity. As US citizens, we do not want our tax dollars to support repressive forces, human rights abuses, and impunity in Honduras.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Coordinator

Cc: Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751  
Hugo Llorens, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via US mail  
Jeremy Spector, Attache for Human Rights and Labor, US Embassy to Honduras ~ via email  
Greg Maggio, Human Rights Desk, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, US State Dep. ~ via US mail  
Benjamin Gadan, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax 202-647-2597  
Dinah Shelton, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ fax: 202 458-3992  
US Senators Brown & Voinovich ~ via email  
US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Ryan, Space, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

2010\_11\_16 CRLN Honduras

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