

<p>via fax: 011 504 2232 1666/2239 3298 Sr. Presidente Porfirio Lobo Sosa President of the Republica of Honduras</p>	<p>011+504 2235 8379 Sra. Ministra Ana Pineda Hernández Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Honduras</p>
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March 3, 2013

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are outraged and deeply saddened at the murders of two peasant farmers in the Lower Aguán region: **José Trejo Cabrera**, age 55, and **Santos Jacobo Cartagena**, age 45.

On February 17 at 6:30 pm, José Trejo Cabrera was assassinated by unknown men as he travelled on his motorbike in the neighborhood of the San Isidro cooperative on the outskirts of Tocoa in Colón Department. José was a member of the campesino organization MARCA (Authentic Claimant Movement of Aguán Campesinos) and the brother of Antonio Trejo Cabrera, the lawyer representing MARCA against powerful land owner Miguel Facussé. Antonio was assassinated in Tegucigalpa on September 22, 2012 (cf our letter of September 24, 2012). No one has been brought to justice for Antonio's killing.

The day before he was killed, José Trejo had been in Tegucigalpa to meet with officials in an effort to ensure justice for his brother's murder. He also visited media outlets to keep the spotlight on the case. Before his death he publicly stated that if anything happened to him, Miguel Facussé should be held responsible.

On the afternoon of February 17, Santos Jacobo Cartagena from the San Esteban cooperative of MUCA (Unified Campesino Movement of Aguan) was shot to death while waiting for a bus at the entrance to the La Confianza cooperative on the road to Tocoa. Numerous members of MUCA and other campesino organizations have been murdered at that location.

These murders occurred on the eve of an official visit by the United Nations' working group on the use of mercenaries and their impact on human rights and the right of peoples to self-determination.

Since the coup d'etat in 2009 at least 90 people in the Aguan Valley have been murdered; most of them have been campesinos involved in land rights struggles or their supporters. In a large number of the cases, witnesses have identified the perpetrators to be private paramilitary guards in the employ of the big landowner. In many other cases, "unidentified gunmen" were witnessed committing the murders.

We strongly urge you to:

- investigate the murders of José Trejo Cabrera and Santos Jacobo Caregena and hold those responsible accountable for their actions;
- take immediate action to end the violence against campesinos in the Lower Aguán region;
- ensure that the campesino community has safe, legal access to the land that was unlawfully taken from them after the 1994 Agricultural Modernization Act.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

CC: Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
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US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Presente Honduras

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