

via fax: 011 504 2239 3298
Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández
President of the Republic of Honduras

via fax: 011 504 2221 5667
Sr. Oscar Chinchilla Banegas
Attorney General of Honduras

July 13, 2015

Dear Sirs:

We are writing to express our outrage at the recent attack on **Alfredo López**, correspondent for Radio Progreso and the network of Garifuna community radio stations. On June 26 he photographed a team of topographers from the Hisopo Resort of Tela Bay who were doing a topographical survey on a plot of land which the women's cooperative El Esfuerzo had cultivated in the Garifuna community of Triunfo de la Cruz in Atlántida Department. A tractor was clearing, deforesting and completely flattening the land, including all the food crops the women's cooperative had planted.

As he was returning to his vehicle to leave the site, López saw the tractor coming towards him. He quickly jumped out of the way, but the tractor stopped in front of him to block his way and then accelerated with the intention of running into him. He was able to outrun the tractor and to take a few more close-up pictures. He filed a complaint with the authorities.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has granted precautionary measures to The Triunfo de la Cruz Community because of land conflicts the Garifuna communities have experienced for many years. The tourism industry projects develop land and construct projects without the consent or input from the indigenous townspeople.

At the present time the Garífuna communities of Triunfo de la Cruz, Barra Vieja, Tornabé and San Juan suffer constant threats of being displaced from their land by the Hisopo Resort project in Tela Bay. Because it is backed by the government and international financial groups, there is intense hostility and danger for those, such as Alfredo López, who oppose such projects.

Therefore, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate and thorough investigation into the attack on Alfredo López described above, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- fully implement the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights precautionary measures ordered for members of Radio Progreso, in line with the beneficiaries' wishes
- ensure that journalists and human rights defenders are able to carry out their activities safely and without fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Sincerely,

Christine Stonebraker-Martinez
Co-Coordinator

cc: Jorge Alberto Milla Reyes, Honduran Amabassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
James Nealon, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037
Kelsey Cambronne, Honduras Desk, US State Dept ~ via email CambronneKL@state.gov
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email JohnsonCD@state.gov
Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458.3992
Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Rapporteur on the Rights of Afro-descendants, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3650
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Radio Progreso 6/29/15_Honduras

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