

November 15, 2001

Rights Action reports on more repression and a political killing, in Honduras

Please re-distribute this information.

Let us know if you want on/off this e-list: info@rightsaction.org

Below you will find:

- summary of an urgent action from COPINH, our partner organization in Honduras
- comments from Rights Action
- what to do

“His Name Was Jose Roberto Isidro, a Mayan-Chorti Man Killed by the Army in Honduras”

The Consejo Civico de Organizaciones Populares e Indigenas de Honduras – COPINH -- condemns the brutal repression against our Chorti sisters and brothers of the Commons of San Andres, department of Ocotepeque [bordering Guatemala], including the assassination of one person, that occurred on November 12, 2001, when the Chorti people were peacefully demonstrating. It was the National Police and soldiers from the 12th Batallion (Cucuyagua) that carried out the repression and killing.

Police and soldiers fired a great amount of tear gas into the demonstrators, and used wooden sticks and live ammunition. 12 people are wounded, including women, 20 more are detained, and Jose Roberto Isidro is dead.

Our Chorti sisters and brothers had been peacefully blocking the Pan-American Highway, demanding that the government turn over to them lands in western Honduras, that are owed to them.

COPINH holds the government of Honduras and President Carlos Flores Facusse responsible for these most recent acts of repression, which are not isolated acts but rather form part of policy of repression and discrimination against indigenous people and popular organizations. COPINH sees that the government's repressive polices -- supported by the interests of the national oligarchy, international financial institutions and 'northern' governments -- directly violate ancestral indigenous rights, rights that are also set out in the Honduran Constitution and in international law, such as Covenant 169 of the International Labor Organization.

COPINH demands that the material and intellectual authors of this repression be brought to justice.

COPINH wishes to make clear that as honorable people, as Honduran women and men, and as the inheritors of the lands and other riches of Honduras, we will not cease in our

human rights work and efforts and we will not cease in their efforts to see justice done for the on-going repression committed against indigenous peoples.

COPINH says ¡Basta ya!, Enough! of the impunity that covers up the killings of more than 50 indigenous, Afro-Honduran and community leaders, during the last 10 years. In the pay of large landowner, and with the tolerance of the Government, the assassins walk free, as if killing indigenous and Afro-Hondurans was nothing at all.

COPINH demands the immediate liberty of the Chorti women and men who were detained, and compensation for the injuries suffered by the wounded. COPINH also demands full compensation for the family of Jose Roberto Isidro, even though no amount of money can replace this loss of life.

To the family members of the José Roberto Isidro, COPINH expresses its condolences and assures them that COPINH will work with them to ensure that justice be done and that the guilty parties end up behind bars.

¡COMPAÑERO JOSE ROBERTO ISIDRO, TU ESPÍRITU ESTA PRESENTE EN LA LUCHA DE LOS PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS DE HONDURAS!
¡LIBERTAD PARA LAS COMPAÑERAS Y COMPAÑEROS PRESOS!
¡NO MAS A LA IMPUNIDAD, SI A LA JUSTICIA!

Dado en Intibuca, Intibuca a los 13 días, del mes de noviembre del año 2001.
CONSEJO CÍVICO DE ORGANIZACIONES POPULARES E INDÍGENAS DE HONDURAS
COPINH

Rights Action

- reminds readers that these recent attacks and acts of repression are common in Honduras, as previously reported by us.
- Reminds readers that impunity is the norm in Honduras, even as 'northern' governments and international financial and "development" institutions refer to Honduras as "democratic" country

WHAT TO DO

Write and call your elected officials and your country's "foreign affairs" officials, sending them copies of this information, demanding that they take steps to see that justice is done for this repression and killing, engaging with them in discussion about the endemic impoverishment, racism and repression in Honduras, a so-called "democratic" country that the US and Canada have full dealings with. Be sure to insist in getting a response from the officials that you contact.

Send letters to the following officials, demanding justice in this case.

Carlos Flores Facusse, Presidente de la Republica de Honduras
Casa Presidencial, Boulevard Juan Pablo II, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
F: 011-504-239-7884, 011-504-235-6949, 011-504-234-1484
e: ministerio@mail.sdp.gob.hn, law_bureau@hotmail.com

Send copies of your actions to the Honduran embassies or consular offices in your country. Be sure to insist in getting a response from the Honduran officials that you contact.

Would you like to be a human rights "accompanier" with COPINH?

Would you like to organize an educational delegation to go to Honduras and learn more of the human rights situation, and of the work of COPINH and other grassroots organizations?

Would you like to make a tax-deductible donation to the education and community development work of COPINH?

Then ... contact Rights Action:

T: 416-654-2074 (number for US and Canadian offices)

E: info@rightsaction.org

W: www.rightsaction.org
