

Honduras: 25 year jail sentences for political prisoners  
January 4, 2004

#### HONDURAS: URGENT ACTION – Political Prisoners

Please re-distribute this urgent action as widely as possible. Please contact officials (in USA, Canada, Honduras) to express your dismay at the on-going abuses of the legal and penal systems.

Funds are needed for the Montaña Verde legal cases, to cover expenses of the witnesses and the lawyer, and to support the political prisoners and their families. [See below how to make donations]

Human rights delegations / accompaniers are needed to go to Honduras and bring international attention to these abusive legal cases. [Contact: info@rightsaction.org <mailto:info@rightsaction.org>, 416-654-2074]

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MARCELINO & LEONARDO MIRANDA, ILLEGALLY ARRESTED JANUARY 7, 2003, TORTURED

WHILE IN JAIL, ARE SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN JAIL!

Marcelino and Leonardo Miranda, indigenous council members from the community of Planes, Montaña Verde (municipality of Gracias, department

Lempira), have been sentenced to 25 years jail, for the fabricated charges

of homicide. The "trials" they received were farsical. [See Rights Action

September 16, 2003, HONDURAS: URGENT ACTION – MONTAÑA VERDE]

#### COPINH ACTIVISM

Given the corruption of the legal and political systems, the Honduran grassroots development group COPINH is initiating, January 5th, 3 days of activism in Honduras to draw attention to the desperate situation of the political prisoners.

Meanwhile, the usual suspects of the "international community" (northern governments, US and Canadian mining companies, the IMF, the World Bank and the IDB, etc) continue to have beneficial economic, political and military relations with "democratic" Honduras. This "international community" is enabling and empowering the impunity of the powerful economic and

military  
sectors in Honduras, and on-going violations of human rights.

PLEASE

Send the letter, below, to the officials listed below. Consider making tax-charitable donation for the community development work of COPINH and Montana Verde.

Thanks. Rights Action

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TAX-CHARITABLE DONATIONS, to directly support the community defense work of COPINH and the legal defense work of Montana Verde: MAKE CHECK PAYABLE to "Rights Action" and mail to USA (1830 Connecticut Av, NW, Washington DC, 20009) or Canada (509 St. Clair Av, W, box73527, Toronto ON, M6C-1C0). DONATE ON LINE [in the USA]: [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org).

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HUMAN RIGHTS ACCOMPANIMENT: If you are interested in going to Honduras, as a human rights observer, contact: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org).

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SEND EMAILS OF PROTEST TO:

Lic. Ricardo Maduro, Presidente de Honduras, F: (504) 235-6949, F: (504) 237-1121

Honduran Ambassador to the United States, Mario Canahuati, T: (202) 966-7702, F: (202) 966-9751, E: [embassy@hondurasemb.org](mailto:embassy@hondurasemb.org).

Honduras Embassy in Canada, T: 613-233-8900, F: 613-232-0193, E: [embhonca@magma.ca](mailto:embhonca@magma.ca).

Honduran mission to the United Nations: 866 UN Plaza Suite 417 New York, NY 10017, T: 212-752-3370, e: [m.suazo@worldnet.att.net](mailto:m.suazo@worldnet.att.net).

Canadian Ambassador for Honduras, Denis Thibault, F: 011-504-232-8767, e: [sjose-gr@dfait-maeci.gc.ca](mailto:sjose-gr@dfait-maeci.gc.ca).

United States Ambassador to Honduras, Larry Palmer, (504)236-9320, F:  
(504)238-4446.

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SAMPLE LETTER:

I write to express grave concern over the torture, illegal imprisonment and shameful 25 year sentence of Marcelino Miranda and Leonardo Miranda, two indigenous leaders from the Lenca descendent village of Monta0a Verde, Gracias, Lempira who are members of the indigenous organization, COPINH.

At midnight on January 8, 2003, twenty-one men entered their town in the municipality of Gracias, Lempira breaking into their houses, threatening their families, and brutally beating them. Marcelino and Leonardo were then dragged to Gracias where they were tortured and kept jailed under fabricated charges.

On April 6, 2003, both Miranda brothers were again brutally beaten and terrorized, this time inside their jail cells by armed men from the COBRA security force unit.

Now, they have been sentenced to 25 years in jail! Honduras's justice and penal systems are being used as instrument of repression.

I urge the immediate release of the Miranda brothers, whose health and security are at risk. Furthermore, I urge an end to the intimidations and violence against the indigenous movement in Honduras and the immediate solution of existing land conflicts.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to hearing from you, with news that the Miranda brothers have been released.

Sincerely,

