

## Rights Action

### DAY 72, HONDURAS COUP RESISTANCE

[Alert#59, September 7, 2009]

#### BELOW

- Rights Action Commentary, Day 72, About Electoral Violence
- Regime takes nationality away from Father Jose Tamayo, 2005 winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize
- Regime talks of opening country for harmful open pit mining
- Electoral violence in Choluteca
- What to do?

#### FOR INTERVIEWS

- Grahame Russell, in Honduras: 011 [504] 8865-2527, [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)
- Karen Spring, in Honduras: 011 [504] 9507-3835, [spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com)

#### SPEAKING TOURS: "RESISTANCE TO MILITARY COUPS & GOLD MINING DEVASTATION IN HONDURAS & GUATEMALA"

In October, activists with Rights Action will be on speaking tours in Ontario, Quebec and eastern Canada, and parts of north-east USA, showing slides and short documentaries and speaking about the on-going pro-democracy, anti-coup movement in Honduras and about indigenous and community resistance to Goldcorp Inc.'s open-pit, cyanide leach mines in Guatemala and Honduras. Karen Spring will be travelling in Ontario; Francois Guindon will be travelling in Quebec and eastern Canada; Grahame Russell will be in the north-east USA. For more information: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org).

- Please re-distribute this information all around
- To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:  
<http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3/>

\* \* \*

#### RIGHTS ACTION COMMENTARY – DAY 72

Again, we had the honor of marching with 1000s of pro-democracy, anti-coup people in the streets in Tegucigalpa. No one has clarity as to how this brutal and harmful situation will end, but indignation and resistance continues to grow throughout the country.

The National Front Against the Coup is no longer just a coordinating group for protest actions that grew organically out of resistance to the June 28 coup. Across the country, villages, towns and rural communities are setting up their own National Front Against the Coup committees, to plan their own resistance actions and to coordinate nationally.

The people's urgent and patient yearning for real democracy, participation, rule of law and accountability is much stronger and deeper than the oligarchy and military leaders ever thought.

The November 29 presidential elections loom gloomily and threateningly on the horizon. The regime is stubbornly and violently insisting the elections will be held. The elections represent one of the end-plays of the oligarchy and military hierarchy to "legitimize" the coup and country take-over.

The pro-democracy movement is 100% clear in its conviction that democratic elections cannot and should not be held under the actual conditions of a militarized country and regime and the on-going repression.

For international consumption, the regime will continue to try and force democracy on Honduras with guns and tear-gas.

Tomorrow, faced with the daily threat of bullets and tear-gas, the pro-democracy movement will march again, in Tegucigalpa and across Honduras, real democracy in action, proof that another world is possible and necessary, and that you have to struggle and fight for it.

\* \* \*

### **"THE PRIEST OF THE PEOPLE AND THE FOREST"**

The illegal de facto regime of Honduras has stripped Father Jose Andres Tamayo Cortez of his nationality. Salvadoran by birth, Tamayo has been a Honduran national for over 20 years. In 2005, he was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize, for his work in defense of the forests and rivers.

From <http://www.goldmanprize.org/node/168>: "Father José Andrés Tamayo Cortez, priest of the people and the forest, is a charismatic Catholic priest leading the struggle for environmental justice in Honduras. He directs the Environmental Movement of Olancho (MAO), a coalition of subsistence farmers and community and religious leaders who are defending their lands against uncontrolled commercial logging. Together they continue to exert heavy pressure on the Honduran government to reform its national forest policy."

Not only does the pro-democracy, anti-coup movement of Honduras consider this decision of the regime to be illegitimate, given that the regime is illegal, but they have taken up the cause of Padre Tamayo.

\* \* \*

### **ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN CHOLUTECA**

(Summary taken from report by Dina Meza, September 6, 2009, <http://www.defensoresenlinea.com>)

At least 8 people were detained, 4 people wounded by gunshot and 20 more wounded as a result of an attack by men armed with rocks, machetes and pistols – the men apparently under the orders of the mayor of Choluteca, Quintin Soriano. This repression took place when members of the National Front Against the Coup protested against a political rally in support of presidential candidate Elvin Santos of the Liberal party.

On the channel 36 news (September 6), one watched as a Liberal party supporter (some say that it is the mayor of Choluteca himself, Quintin Soriano) wearing an Elvin Santos t-shirt walked towards the protesters carrying the red-white flag of the Liberal party in one hand and a 9mm pistol in the other.

COFADEH (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras) has filed habeas corpus petitions in favor of the detained protesters. Lawyers Against the Coup, members of the National Front Against the Coup, traveled to Choluteca to directly intercede on behalf of the detained and the wounded.

This may be the first documented case of armed violence at an election rally; few expect it to be the last. Across Honduras, there is widespread opposition to the holding of elections, given that the country is living under the control of a military regime. The National Front Against the Coup put it best: "Without the restitution of constitutional order, the

general elections would be the legalization of the military violence against the state; for that reason, they are unacceptable.”

Hondurans will continue to protest against the military-oligarchic regime and against the holding of these manipulated, military-controlled elections; they fear that the regime and dominant Nationalist and Liberal parties will use increasing amounts of violence.

\* \* \*

### **GOLDCORP: “GOLPISTA” (“COUP SUPPORTERS”),** by Karen Spring

In the marches, protesters are learning what companies (national and international) support the rights, liberties and demands of the Honduran people and which ones continue to promote their own economic interests in the country, before and after the June 28th coup.

In a recent march, thousands of protesters passed the office of the Canadian mining company, Entremares, a subsidiary of Goldcorp Inc. As we passed, people banged on the doors, pointed at the Entremares/Goldcorp sign, and yelled “Y los golpistas?” (“And the coup supporters?”), and answered “FUERA!” (“Get out!”), “Y los golpistas .... FUERA!”

Graffiti painted on the outside of the Entremares/ Goldcorp building reads: “Exploiters”, “Thieves.”

Recently, Adolfo Facusse, one of the most influential business men in Honduras, was asked about the economic isolation Honduras is facing as a result of the military coup. President of the National Association of Industries (ANDI), Facusse mentioned that the regime might lift a ban on open-pit mining to attract investment to Honduras (<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSN03525204>).

This comment was made at a time when rumours are circulating in Honduras that the military regime dominated National Congress might re-open the mining debate and work to reverse the moratorium that President Zelaya put on mining concessions and exploration licenses.

\* \* \*

### **WHAT TO DO**

AMERICANS & CANADIANS should contact our members of congress, senators & members of parliament every day, day after day, send copies of this information, and demand:

- an immediate suspension of the release of all international funds and loans to the regime
- unequivocal denunciation of the military coup
- no recognition of this military coup and the regime of Roberto Micheletti
- an end to police, army and para-military repression and respect for safety and human rights of all Hondurans
- no recognition of the November 2009 elections, that candidates from the traditional Nationalist and Liberal parties are campaigning for, even as the country is militarized and repression is widespread
- unconditional return of the entire constitutional government of President Zelaya
- concrete and targeted economic, military and diplomatic sanctions against the coup plotters and perpetrators
- application of international and national justice against the coup plotters and perpetrators
- reparations to the victims for the illegal actions and rights violations committed during this illegal coup

**TO DONATE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE FUNDS** to the peaceful, people's pro-democracy movement in Honduras, make check to "rights action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

CANADA: 552-351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>

For foundations and institutional donors, Rights Action can (upon request) provide a full proposal of which organizations and people we are channeling funds to and supporting.