

Rights Action

DAY 152 OF HONDURAS COUP RESISTANCE

(November 26, 2009, Honduras Coup Alert#96)

JUST SAY NO to sending 'Observer Missions'

Rights Action commentary

"The election has the fingerprints of a coup," Mr. Garcia (Foreign Policy advisor to President Lula of Brazil) said. To accept the results of the election, he added, would encourage "another country to adopt the same solution - 'We don't like this president; let's topple him.'"

Rights Action is one of a number of organizations that have international human rights observer missions in Honduras. These are NOT election observing missions.

We do not recognize the validity of these elections. For reasons set out in many previous Alerts – and set out below -, a majority of Honduras and most of the so-called "international community" know the November 29th elections (for President, Congress members, and Mayors) are neither free nor fair in any way.

These elections make a mockery of what democracy is. They aim to legitimize and justify the illegal and repressive military coup regime.

Now – and right through to next week - is the time to contact your own politicians (members of parliament, congress members and senators) and insist on:

- The unconditional return of President Zelaya and his government to full constitutional power and authority
- No recognition of the November 29 elections
- Justice for the plotters and perpetrators of the military coup, and
- Reparations for the victims of the regime repression

BELOW

- Human rights update: by COFADEH, prepared by COMPA
- New York Times article: Brazil urges U.S. not to recognize elections
- Letter from John L. Burton, Chairman, California Democratic Party, to Hillary Clinton, U.S. secretary of state – 'just say no'

FOR INTERVIEWS & MORE INFO:

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

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COMPA (Convergence of Movements of Organizations of the Peoples of the Americas - www.otrosmundoschiapas.org) reports:

MILLION DOLLAR ARMORED ATTACK VEHICLE

The Committee of Relatives of Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH) has confirmed information that demonstrates these facts:

In a communication circulated November 9, 2009, by the Secretary of Finance of the de facto regime to the authorities of the Customs in the Port of Cortes, there was ordered the import free of taxes of an armored truck for control of street disturbances, based on the Ford truck model F750, with a Cummins diesel motor with six speed transmission, with all the accessories, at a cost of \$11,990,000 USD, coming from the United States, through intermediary of the representative company, Comercio e Inversiones S. de R.L. of C.V. and co-signed by the Secretary of Security.

This death machine is equipped with a mounted water canon with 300 pounds of pressure and 150 gallons per minute capacity, 4 armored cameras with 360 degree vision, operated from a video recording station within the truck.

In addition, the heavy machine is equipped with doors for the placement of weapons, a barricade remover in front, rotation devices in all the tires in the case of flats, sirens, police lights, LCD monitors on console and rear station platform, protected by armor on the floor, in the windows, motor, radiator, fuel tank and battery.

The scandalous cost invested in mortal weapons registered in purchase Order SDES-0584-2009 is signed by the Secretary of Security, Jorge Rodas Gamero, who switched taking instructions from his commander Manuel Zelaya Rosales and now fulfills the whims of Roberto Micheletti.

TEAR-GAS

Elsewhere the General Secretary of Finance, Rafael Antonio Trejo sent a note to the customs authorities in the La Mesa in San Pedro Sula to authorize the entry at official expense of 10,000 tear gas hand grenades valued at 12,800,000 lempiras and 5,000 tear gas projectiles of 37 mm each valued at 4,950,000 lempiras for a total value of 17,750,000 lempiras, detailed in request number 003534.

THREATENING ARMY LETTER

The squandering of millions utilized in the purchase of munitions and urban combat units, added to the communications circulated to the mayors asking them to identify members of the Resistance against the Coup d' Etat, in addition to the order to vacate the rooms in the hospital centers of the country, reaffirms the vision that we are confronting terrible signs on the eve of the implementation of the spurious act that will take place on November 29.

TARGETTING TEACHERS

COFADEH has denounced the fact that the public school teachers are being considered as military and police targets, many of whose members have been assassinated for condemning the coup d'etat and demanding the return of the constitutional order, and hundreds of teachers have been victims of brutal repression.

IN MEMORY: LUIS GRADIS ESPINAL

Yesterday November 23 we learned of the kidnapped by paramilitaries of Professor Luis Gradis Espinal (56 years of age), Coordinator of the Resistance in the southern zone, and today his lifeless body was found feet and hands tied on a dirt road in the hamlet Las Casitas, southwest of the capital, near an area where various military units are located.

Professor Gradis Espinal left his house last Sunday, November 22 for the capital with the objective of meeting with one of his sons. Confirmed versions have it that Gradis Espinal was driving his vehicle when he was intercepted by a motorized patrol in the periphery loop road of the capital. The teacher was captured and taken to an unknown place.

COFADEH energetically condemns the assassination of Luis Gradis Espinal, whose death is added to that of other teachers, Roger Vallejo, Mario Contreras and Felix Murillo.

THREATENED: MARCO TULIO VALDEZ ... ONE CASE OF MANY

In the same way our concern is needed in the case of professor Marco Tulio Valdez, leader of the Resistance in San Lorenzo, Valle, since he is being strongly threatened by the military authorities who have taken absolute control of the

department; from this moment we hold responsible this body, especially Commander Mendoza, for any attempts on the life of Valdez.

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The New York Times
November 26, 2009

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/26/world/americas/26honduras.html>

BRASILIA (Reuters) - The United States risks souring relations with much of Latin America if it recognizes a presidential election in Honduras on Sunday, the foreign policy adviser to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil said in an interview on Wednesday.

The de facto leader of Honduras, Roberto Micheletti, has said he hopes the election will end a political crisis that began when soldiers placed President Manuel Zelaya on an airplane and sent him into exile on June 28.

The United States, which condemned the coup, has not announced an official position on the election, but American officials have implied that the Obama administration will support the outcome, saying that recognition of the presidential election was not contingent on Mr. Zelaya's reinstatement.

"The United States will become isolated - that is very bad for the United States and its relationship with Latin America," the Brazilian foreign policy adviser, Marco Aurelio Garcia, said after he had spoken on the telephone to the White House national security adviser, Gen. James L. Jones. Mr. Garcia said that "very important countries - the majority in terms of population and political weight - won't recognize" the results of the election.

Neither Mr. Micheletti nor Mr. Zelaya, who has been living in the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa, the capital, since sneaking back into Honduras in September, is running for president.

Much of Latin America had hoped that President Obama would herald a new era in Latin American diplomacy, after eight years of the unpopular Bush administration and decades of perceived meddling by Washington. "It would be good if that expectation were not frustrated," Mr. Garcia said he had told General Jones.

Mr. Garcia and other Latin American diplomats contend that recognizing the election will essentially legitimize a coup in a region that has been consolidating its democracies. He and others say that conditions for free elections do not now exist in Honduras.

"The election has the fingerprints of a coup," Mr. Garcia said. To accept the results of the election, he added, would encourage "another country to adopt the same solution - `We don't like this president; let's topple him.'"

Mr. Garcia, who said that da Silva shared his views, explained his concerns to General Jones in what he described as a friendly conversation. "General Jones thanked me and said he would discuss it with his colleagues in the White House," he said.

Mr. Garcia insisted that Brazil, which has been seeking a growing leadership role in the region and beyond, was not trying to challenge the United States. "This is what you do between friends - you say, `Hey, that's not O.K.," he said. But if Washington insists on recognizing the election, several countries will respond by seeking countermeasures in the Organization of American States, Mr. Garcia said. "The O.A.S. itself would deal with that and I already heard from some members that Honduras could be excluded from the O.A.S.," he added.

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LETTER FROM John L. Burton, Chairman, California Democratic Party, TO HILLARY CLINTON

(From: Kate Folmar <kate@cadem.org>)

November 24, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W,
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

I am writing this letter to urge the U.S. State Department not to recognize the legitimacy of the upcoming November 29 elections in Honduras. I say this for two main reasons: (1) President Manuel Zelaya has not been reinstated to the office to which he was democratically elected, as was required by the San Jose Accords, and (2) martial-law conditions have been instituted by the coup government that make it impossible to hold free, open and democratic elections.

On June 29, the day after President Manuel Zelaya was kidnapped from his home and taken by force to Costa Rica, U.S. President Barack Obama stated the following:

"Mr. Zelaya was deposed by a military coup. He was democratically elected and remains the president of Honduras. He has not completed his term. It would be a terrible precedent if we start moving backwards into the era where military coups are a means of transition."

President Obama spoke the truth. But unfortunately U.S. policy in relation to Honduras has departed markedly from this initial policy statement by President Obama. On November 5, Under Secretary of State Thomas Shannon told CNN en Español that the United States would recognize the legitimacy of the November 29 elections even if President Zelaya were not reinstated as president. This would violate the spirit and letter of the San Jose Accords and would amount to an unconditional endorsement of the coup government and its repressive policies.

Today, with less than week left before the elections, there is still time for the U.S. government to join with the rest of the Latin American and international community in rejecting these martial-law elections.

I also support the call for new elections, at a later date, issued by President Zelaya from his office in the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa on November 19. He stated,

"As Honduras's Constitutional President, I condemn the fraudulent elections of November 29 organized by the coup government. They are nothing but a charade meant to whitewash and legitimize a coup d'etat, and to hide the crimes committed by the de-facto regime against the Honduran people, the Constitution and Democracy.

"Our position is clear: We do not, and we will not, recognize the outcome of these elections, and we will legally contest them. For these reasons, it will be necessary to hold new elections, when all the proper conditions are met to hold genuinely free, fair and democratic elections."

Peace and friendship,

signed/ John L. Burton, Chairman, California Democratic Party

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ACTION NEEDED

WRITE NOW, RIGHT NOW

CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, CONGRESSPERSON, SENATOR, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE WHITE HOUSE & THE STATE DEPARTMENT, AND DEMAND:

- The unconditional return of President Zelaya and his government to full constitutional power and authority
- No recognition of the November 29 elections
- Justice for the plotters and perpetrators of the military coup, and
- Reparations for the victims of the regime repression

TO DONATE FUNDS

Please continue to financially support the pro-democracy, anti-coup movement in Honduras. This extraordinary struggle, to defeat the oligarchic-military regime and to remake their constitution and country, will continue well into 2010. Make your tax-deductible 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 provide a report of which organizations and people we are channeling funds to and supporting.

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