

Rights Action

December 18, 2009

Death Squad Kills Five Members Of Resistance In Tegucigalpa. The Death Squads Are Back

By El Libertador, <http://hondurasresists.blogspot.com/2009/12/death-squad-kills-five-members-of.html>

Below, more stories of State repression and killings in Honduras.

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS for Honduran civil society organizations doing pro-democracy and human rights defense work, see at bottom.

There is no reason for North Americans to write the “government” of Honduras to demand they respect human rights and properly investigate these political crimes. They won’t. The military coup regime in Honduras is planning and carrying out State repression on purpose; repression will absolutely continue in Honduras.

North Americans must send these informations to our politicians and governments. We must hold our governments partially and significantly accountable for Honduras’ State repression.

The United States and Canada are the main governments that have accepted and endorsed the November 29th “elections” as legitimate (“elections” that have served to legitimize the June 28th military coup and sweep under the rug 5 months of repression and killings).

Now, the illegitimate government continues with its repression. But for the legitimization and support that the Honduran regime is receiving from the USA and Canada, it would not be able to repress with such impunity.

JOIN A HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION TO HONDURAS, January 24-31, 2010

Since the June 28th oligarchic-military coup against the government of President Zelaya, Rights Action – along with other North American activist and solidarity groups – has been working hard to support the extraordinary anti-coup, pro-democracy movement.

Now that the November 29th “elections” are over, this delegation will overlap with the January 27th “formal transfer of power” from President Zelaya to the incoming President-elect Pepe Lobo. Anyone following the situation in Honduras knows ‘free and fair’ elections were not held on November 29th, President Zelaya

is still effectively jailed inside the Brazilian embassy in Tegucigalpa (capital city), and the “transfer of power” looms as another key date in this long-term struggle against the oligarchic-military regime.

More than an educational delegation (anyone who comes will learn a huge amount about the background context that led to the military coup, about the courage and spirit of Honduras’ peaceful pro-democracy movement and about the nature and repression of the oligarchic-military regime), this will be a human rights accompaniment and observation delegation.

IF INTERESTED, contact Grahame Russell: info@rightsaction.org

* * *

FOR INTERVIEWS & MORE INFORMATION

Annie Bird, annie@rightsaction.org, 1-202-680-3002; Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org, 1-860-352-2448

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

* * *

DEATH SQUAD KILLS FIVE MEMBERS OF RESISTANCE IN TEGUCIGALPA - THE DEATH SQUADS ARE BACK

El Libertador, full article with picture: <http://hondurasresists.blogspot.com/2009/12/death-squad-kills-five-members-of.html>

Death squads have come back to do what they do. Sunday, December 6, a vehicle without license plates took the lives of 5 people, all identified as members of the popular resistance against the dictatorship that was installed in the country 5 months ago.

The event occurred in sector 6 of the Villanueva neighbourhood of Tegucigalpa, where unknown men in a white vehicle without license plates opened fire without saying a word on the five now dead men who were near a traffic circle by the belt-line road.

According to one of the residents of the area, who for obvious reasons of security declined to give his name, "the boys (the victims) were active members of the Resistance. They had organized the committees in the Honduras and Víctor F

Ardón neighbourhoods so that the neighbours could get involved in the Resistance Front."

The names of the deceased are: Isaac Coello, (24); Roger Reyes (22), Kenneth Rosa (23), Gabriel Parrales and Marco Vinicio Matute (39), while one woman, Wendy Reyes, was wounded and is receiving treatment at the medical school hospital.

Area residents said that in the hours prior to the bloody event, there was an agent of the National Criminal Investigation Directorate (DNIC) watching the area where the crime took place and who mysteriously left shortly before the killings.

José Luna, a sub-inspector of the Preventative Policía responded to questions about the killings by saying "Whenever there are murders, there are people who say the victims were good people." He added that the police are tracking those responsible for the massacre. So far, however, they have not been able to locate the vehicle described in the incident.

During the last few weeks, double cabin pick-ups with no plates have taken on the task of intimidating members of the Popular Resistance Against the Coup d'etat. Reporters of this publication (El Libertador) have also complained of being followed and observed by vehicles with similar characteristics, and human rights organizations are also been aware of such anomalies.

* * *

December 8, 2009

HONDURAN YOUTH UNDER ATTACK: MORGUES ARE FILLED WITH BODIES OF YOUNG MEN, HONDURAN STATE REFUSES TO INVESTIGATE

By Dawn Paley, <http://www.mediacoop.ca/story/2232>

TEGUCIGALPA – Fifteen youth were killed in violent attacks last weekend in the Honduran capital, including five young men who were massacred on a street corner.

"We are in a very difficult moment here in Honduras, and a terror is being instilled in citizens," said the father of one of the deceased at his wake this afternoon. He said his son may have participated in a march against the June 28 coup d'état, but insisted that he was not a political activist.

The five men killed were Isaac Enrique Coello Soto, 24, Roger Andrés Reyes Aguilar, 22, Kenneth José Rosa, 23, Gabriel Parrales Zelaya, 34, and Marcos Vinicio Matute Escobar, 39.

The massacre was carried out by masked men who stepped out of an unmarked Nissan and opened fire in the Villanueva neighbourhood on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa. Locals claim the gunmen were wearing military uniforms.

Honduran media reported yesterday that the massacre was carried out by police. Neither the police nor the military have admitted that they were responsible for the killings. One woman survived the massacre and is now in hiding.

“Youth have been criminalized in this country, because they present a danger to this dictatorship” said Dina Meza, a journalist who works with COFADEH, a group formed by families of people disappeared and detained in Honduras. “Youth is criminalized, and therefore young people are being assassinated,” she said.

The weekend killings came on the heels of November 29th elections that took place while deposed President Manuel Zelaya remained trapped in the Brazilian Embassy in Honduras. There were no international elections observers present during the election, and despite emerging evidence of election day violence, Canada’s junior foreign minister Peter Kent said the elections “appear to have been run freely and fairly.”

The families of the deceased want the Human Rights department of Honduras to investigate the killings, but thus far there has been no move to do so.

“In this country there was a coup d’état, and institutionalism is broken,” said Meza. “The official human rights department, an institution that should already have begun an investigation, isn’t doing so,” she said.

“There are hitmen executing people, there are paramilitaries being paid with money from the people, there are people from the death squads that operated in the 80s... who have seen this context of the coup as a phenomenal opportunity to continue with repression and all the lessons they learned in the School of the Americas,” said Meza.

The weekend murders weekend raise the death toll since June 28 to at least 35.

* * *

CIPRODEH DENOUNCES ASSASSINATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER (Translated by Quixote Center, Tom Loudon, toml@quixote.org)

On December 4, 2009, human rights defender Walter Trochez, member of the gay/ lesbian/ bisexual/ trans community and active member of the National Resistance Front was kidnapped and brutally beaten in front of the Obleisco Park of Comayagua by four hooded men in a grey pick-up truck without

plates. Months before, Trochez had denounced that a vehicle matching this description was monitoring his home and he had changed residence as a result.

On Dec. 4th, the kidnappers told him that they knew him very well and that they would kill him. They put a hook over his head, insulted him and questioned him regarding the resistance, asking questions about the leaders and their movements. That day, Trochez escaped with his life. The next day he denounced the incident before national and international bodies.

Today we received a report that Trochez was assassinated by two bullets in front of Larach and Cia in the center of Tegucigalpa. We denounce this deplorable act before the Honduran people and the international community. This death is one more in a list of ten deaths suffered by the gay/ lesbian/ bisexual/ trans community of Honduras and part of a pattern of persecution, harassment and threats directed at organizations and human rights defenders under the coup regime.

We demand that an investigation into this crime be conducted to identify those responsible and hold them accountable.

We demand that the Honduran State guarantee the physical integrity of those who defend human rights and that it respect and comply with international treaties and conventions that protect human rights defenders and the general population.

We demand that the persecution, threats and harassment of individuals, leaders and organizations that have ideological differences with the de fact regime cease.

(CIPRODEH, Honduras)

* * *

HONDURAS: FULL AND PROMPT INVESTIGATION NEEDED INTO DEATH OF HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER

14 December 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/honduras-full-and-prompt-investigation-needed-death-human-rights-campaig>

Honduran authorities must launch an urgent and independent investigation into the murder of human rights defender Walter Trochez who was killed late on Sunday night while walking home through the centre of Tegucigalpa, Amnesty International said today.

According to sources, Walter Trochez was shot in the chest by a drive-by gunman and taken to hospital where he later died. Amnesty International fears that he may have been targeted because of his human rights work.

Walter Trochez told Amnesty International on Friday that he had escaped a kidnapping attempt on 4 December after suffering several hours of beatings and threats by masked men. They had interrogated Walter Trochez about individuals opposed to the de facto authorities who seized power following the 28 June coup d'état.

"The murder of Walter Trochez must be investigated immediately and those responsible brought to justice." said Kerrie Howard, Americas Deputy Director at Amnesty International. "It is essential that human rights defenders and opposition activists are able to exercise freedom of expression without fearing threats or attacks."

Since June, Walter Trochez had been documenting human rights violations during protests against the coup d'état. He was already known for his human rights work with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community in Honduras.

During his kidnapping on 4 December, four armed men had forced Walter Trochez into their van before repeatedly beating him in the face with a pistol butt and threatening that "even if you give us the information we're going to kill you, we have orders to kill you".

After finally managing to open the van door, Walter fell out on the street and ran into a deserted wasteland where he hid until his captors drove off.

"Amnesty International's fears that Walter's killing may be a sign of worse abuses to come in the atmosphere of political instability and fear that has prevailed since the copu d'état in June," said Kerrie Howard. "Walter's killers must be brought to justice, and the de facto authorities must ensure all reports of reprisals against protestors and campaigners are fully investigated and subject to the full weight of the law."

* * *

DAUGHTER OF JOURNALIST MURDERED IN TEGUCIGALPA

12/16/2009, http://quixote.org/daughter-controversial-journalist-murdered-tegucigalpa?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter

Dec. 16, 2009 Last night the daughter of controversial journalist Karol Cabrera was murdered by unidentified individuals on a motorcycle. Cabrera works for Channel 8, a state channel which changed administration after the military coup detat on June 28th.

The unidentified individuals fired on 16 year old Catherine Nicolle Rodriguez Cabrera who was seven months pregnant. Doctors were miraculously able to save the life of the infant.

The murder occurred in the midst of a climate of insecurity and constant human rights violations for which the de fact authorities provide no response. Karol Cabrera, mother of the murder victim, had reported receive death threats for several weeks.

(THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, ECUMENICAL OBSERVATORY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN HONDURAS)

* * *

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Since the June 28th military coup, Rights Action has channeled over \$75,000 of your donations and grants to Honduran civil society organizations doing pro-democracy, pro-rule of law, and human rights defense work. Make check payable 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>

Complete proposal-report available on request.

WHAT TO DO

- JOIN Rights Action's listserv: <http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3>
- RECEIVE Rights Action's quarterly newsletter mail list. Send name and address to: info@rightsaction.org
- CREATE YOUR OWN email and mail lists and re-distribute our information
- RECOMMENDED DAILY NEWS: www.democracynow.org / www.upsidedownworld.org / www.dominionpaper.ca
- RECOMMENDED BOOKS: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine"; Paolo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"; Dr. Seuss's "Horton Hears a Who"