

Rights Action  
November 21, 2011

Below:

**Assassinations In Honduras Under Military-Backed Regime Headed By “Pepe” Lobo**

By Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN)

**Honduras: America's Great Foreign Policy Disgrace  
First, The Us Backed A Coup That Deposed The Elected President.  
Now, It's Backing The Return Of Death-Squad Government**

By Mark Weisbrot, The Guardian

**WHAT TO DO:** see below

- Please re-post this
- Get on-off Rights Action's listserv: [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)
- Follow Rights Action on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org](http://www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

**ASSASSINATIONS IN HONDURAS UNDER MILITARY-BACKED  
REGIME HEADED BY “PEPE” LOBO**

Updated: 12 November 2011

Dear Colleagues – I send you this updated comprehensive list of politically related assassinations in Honduras. The list also includes an incomplete list the names of disappeared and severely wounded. If you know of cases that are not included, please email me the information at [gcozette@crln.org](mailto:gcozette@crln.org) so I can further update the list. Special thanks to FIAN Honduras, whose reports have offered the most timely and comprehensive updates and analysis - and for the larger team of you that translates documents and urgent actions from Spanish into English.

Gary L. Cozette, Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN)

4750 N. Sheridan Road #429, Chicago, IL 60640, 773.293.2964,  
[gcozette@crln.org](mailto:gcozette@crln.org), [www.crln.org](http://www.crln.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **2011: 59 Assassinations**

\*\*\*\*\*

05 November 2011 – José Luis Lemus Ramos, age 32 and the father of two children age 4 and 7, died at 2:00 a.m. en el Hospital Catarino Rivas, in San Pedro Sula, Cortés, from gunshot wounds fired by security guards of René Morales on 01 November 2011 in the Aguán. (FIAN)

01 November 2011 – A group of campesinos farmers and children belonging to the Authentic Struggle Organization of the Campesinos of Aguán (MARCA) were attacked by a patrol of heavily armed security guards of René Morales. The campesinos were returning from a cemetery having visited the graves of family members on the Day of the Dead. As the campesinos neared the palm oil processing plant owned by René Morales, guards began firing against the group of farmers who were traveling in a vehicle, assassinated Catalino Efrain Lopez, the father of six children who died instantly, while Jose Luis Lemus and Nilda Funez were wounded by bullets. Jose Luis Lemus is hovering between life and death. Nilda Funes was shot but her life is not at risk. Nilda Funez is liaison for the Human Rights Commission of the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP) in the municipality of Trujillo for the campesino sector. On one of the occasions in which the Honduran army violently evicted the settlement of La Despertar, they took Nilda's vest that identified her as a defender of human rights, tore it, stomped on it and burnt it. They told her that if she didn't disappear from the scene of the eviction the same thing that happened to her vest would happen to her; the same thing happened on that day to two other human rights defenders. (FIAN)

22 October 2011 - Alejandro Rafael Vargas Castellanos, age 22, the son of National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) president Julieta Castellanos, and his friend Carlos David Pineda Rodríguez, age 24, were found murdered in Tegucigalpa at kilometer 8 on the highway that leads from Tegucigalpa to southern Honduras. Rafael Vargas and Carlos Pineda left a friend's birthday party called their relatives to say they were heading home, the police spokesman told reporters. Relatives began to search for the young men when they failed to arrive home. Alejandro Vargas was in his last year of law school. Carlos Pineda was

finishing a degree in sociology. The motive for these murders remains unclear. However, since these murders have subsequently been shown by video to have been carried out by uniformed police, and one of the victims is the son of the national university rector who is a member of the government's own Truth & Reconciliation Commission, it is reasonable to conclude at this time that political motives may be behind these two murders. Photos: Alejandro Vargas – above; Carlos Pineda – below. (El Tiempo, Latin American Herald Tribune)

15 October 2011 - Segundo Mendoza, age 26, from the La Consentida farming community and an activist in the campesino movement of Rigores, was disappeared during an attack by armed guards working for Miguel Facussé, police and soldiers from the Xantruch command who arrived at the settlement of Paso Aguán and began firing on men, women and children. The previous day, October 14, members of Operation Zatruch and private guards of the big landowners surrounded the campesinos of this settlement. The campesinos complain that the operatives were charging them money to be allowed to pass. On Sunday, October 16, the body of Segundo Mendoza was found in the morgue of the City of La Ceiba in the Department of Atlántida, 60 kilometers from his settlement. His body shows various bullet wounds from the heavy caliber weapon which killed him. (FNRP-Colón)

11 October 2011 - Santos Seferino Zelaya, age 35, from the La Aurora campesino settlement was murdered at about 8:00 am by private guards of Miguel Facussé as he and other members of the Aurora coop were working near the property line of Miguel Facussé's land. Witnesses say Santos Seferino was hit and died instantly as others ran to take cover. Seferino leaves two young children, ages 8 and 10. La Aurora is one of the settlements of Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (MUCA) that was selected to be part of an agreement between the government and the landowners following intense negotiations. (FNRP-Colón)

02 October 2011 - Carlos Martinez, age 23, from the Cooperativa Lempira on the right bank of the Aguán was assassinated. A relative of Martinez claimed he was killed by a security guard from a nearby plantation belonging to Miguel Facussé, the wealthy and powerful Honduran landowner. (Rights Action, KairosPhotos)

29 September 2011- Miriam Emelda Fiallo was gunned down and died. Her husband Germán Castro was hospitalized with wounds. The attack as they were traveling by car occurred near Tocoa in the district of Prieto. Germán was the President of Prieta, one of the 15 or so co-operatives that make up the COAPALMA federation. Shooting began from the vehicle pursuing them before entering Prieta until the car of Germán crash in the curb. They shot him again. Miriam Emelda told Germán: "I was shot too. I love you. Take care of the children". She died immediately. Germán was taken to hospital in La Ceiba. Germán was elected president after then-president Rigoberto Funez was assassinated in February 2011. Germán's brother Fredy, then treasurer, was also killed in the attack. (Real News; Proyecto Hondureño, photo from profile at [soncio.com](http://soncio.com))

15 September 2011 - Political and sporting leader Dennis Montoya was assassinated in front of his mother's home in Choloma, Cortés Department. Dennis is father of Dennis Muñoz Bonilla of Agents of Change. (FIAN)

15 September 2011 - Juan de Jesús Figueroa, murdered in the community of Matarras, Arizona municipality, Department of Atlántida. Juan was the president of the community Patronato (community council) of Matarras, a faithful watchdog and monitor of the administrative conduct of various regional authorities and energetic environmental defender of the department's natural resources. (MADJ)

08 September 2011 - Medardo Flores, a 61-year-old journalist with Radio Uno was shot dead near his home in Puerto Cortés when he drove into an ambush and his car was sprayed with bullets. Flores was a supporter of ousted former president Manuel Zelaya and was a regional treasurer for a pro-Zelaya group. Irina Bokov, Director-General of UNESCO, condemned the murder: "The number of journalists killed in Honduras over the last two years is very worrying. These crimes must be investigated and their perpetrators must be brought to justice..." Arnulfo Aguilar, Radio Uno's founder and director, told the local press that Flores spent the 1980s in exile "to escape from persecution by the repressive forces of the state". Radio Uno has often been the target of harassment and raids by the police and army since the coup. Aguilar narrowly escaped an armed ambush outside his home on 27 April 2011. Sixteen

journalists have been killed in Honduras since February 2010.  
(UNESCO PRESS, The Guardian)

10 September 2011 - In the evening, unknown persons assassinated student Ramón Antonio Cruz Lara, age 17, with gunshots. Ramón was a resistance activist and son of the teacher Héctor Cruz, member of Copemh and FNRP of La Lima, Cortés Department. The youth had no problems. (FIAN)

07 September 2011 - An unidentified man shot and killed Honduran activist Mahadeo “Emo” Sadloo at his small automobile tire shop in eastern Tegucigalpa. Sadloo had been active in the National Popular Resistance Front (FNRP) from the time when the grassroots coalition was founded to oppose the June 2009 military coup against former president José Manuel (“Mel”) Zelaya. He was also a strong supporter of teacher and student demonstrations in defense of public education. Zelaya called Sadloo’s death a “political assassination” and a “declaration of war” against him and his supporters; the FNRP said it was “a political crime intended to demobilize and demoralize the Popular Resistance.” Sadloo, a naturalized Honduran citizen of Indian origin, immigrated to Honduras from Suriname more than 35 years ago. In August 2010 Lobo’s government reportedly considered deporting Sadloo as a “foreigner who meddled in Honduran politics”. (Weekly News Update on the Americas)

02 September 2011- Olvin David Gonzalez Godoy, 24 years old, married and a father of an 8-month-old girl was assassinated today. He was a member of the July 21st Cooperative affiliated to the MUCA –MI. He was found dead near the turn off to the MUCA cooperative Las Marañoses at 5 am. (FIAN, El Tiempo)

01 September 2011 - A couple, both teachers of the school Instituto 18 de noviembre, – Juan de Dios Palencia Mejía, age 55, who is also a pastor, and Dunia Suyapa Sánchez Zapata were killed by gunshots in Catacamas, Olancho Department, by unknown persons while driving. They tried to escape and kept driving until they fainted. They were taken to emergency but died on the way. (FIAN)

22 August 2011 - Nahúm Alexander Guerra, age 17, in his second year of agronomy studies at the “Pompilio Ortega” Agricultural School in Macueliso, Santa Barbara, was assassinated at 7:00pm while on shift

with other student colleagues at the front gate of his college on the international western highway. Nahum and his student colleagues had taken over the agricultural school with the purpose of defending public education. A vehicle was circulating along the highway, and upon seeing the students, its occupants shouted “Strikers, Strikers!” and opened fire on them. The bullets struck Nahum. (ResistenciaHonduras.net)

21 August 2011 - Pedro Salgado, vice-president of the Unified Campesino Movement of Aguán (MUCA), was shot then beheaded at about 8:00 pm at his home in the La Concepción empresa cooperative. His spouse, Reina Irene Mejía, was also shot to death at the same time. Pedro suffered a murder attempt in December 2010. Salgado, like the presidents of all the cooperatives claiming rights to land used by African palm oil businessmen in the Aguán, had been subject to constant death threats since the beginning of 2011. Salgado had recently met with the military commander of the Xatruch operation, asking for protection. (ResistenciaHonduras.net, Rights Action)

20 August 2011 - Arnoldo Portillo, member of the “5 de Enero Empresa” campesino cooperative, of the La Concepcion community in the Bajo Aguán, left his home, and did not return. His neighbors began a search early the morning of August 21, 2011. His badly brutalized body was found in the dump of the La Lempira campesino community; he had been killed by machete strikes and gunfire. (Rights Action)

20 August 2011 - Secundino Ruiz Vallecillo, president of the Cooperative San Isidro as well as president of the Authentic Peasant Protest Movement of Aguán (MARCA), was murdered in the style of a paid assassin at 10:30 am in Tocoa. MARCA is member organization of the Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular (FNRP). Mr. Ruiz was shot as he and the treasurer of MARCA, Eliseo Pavón Ávila, were leaving a local bank where they had withdrawn \$10,000 to pay workers in their organization. Mr. Pavón was also shot, but apparently suffered only a minor wound. The assailants were reportedly riding a black motorcycle and wearing ski masks. MARCA, along with the Unified Peasant Movement of Aguán (MUCA), is one of the main groups representing peasant farmers living in the Bajo Aguán Valley, struggling to obtain titles to lands they believe were stolen from their families. On 24 May, the Lobo government signed an agreement with MARCA granting it 2,151.4

manzanas, which equals 3,715 acres. (COFADEH, DefensoresEnLinea.com, Rights Action)

18 August 2011 - At 1:00 pm, Victor Manuel Mata Oliva, age 40, Sergio Magdiel Amaya, age 18, and a child Roldin Marel Villeda, age 15, were massacred in the area between El Bridge and the Panama Cooperative in the municipality of Trujillo, department of Colon. The assassination was an ambush from the side of the highway, it has been relayed that AK-47s were used and that the assassins are Miguel Faccusé's guards, who were driving a blue vehicle with a double cabin. (CODEH, FIAN, In These Times)

15 August 2011 - In Tocoa, Colón department, five more people were massacred in a pick-up truck that left the Honduran National Agrarian Institute (INA) headquarters, where hundreds of campesino farmers currently live in temporary huts, after being illegally evicted from their homes and lands. The August 15th shooting occurred in front of a palm plantation controlled by the Dinant Corporation, and security guards had been seen at the location moments before the massacre. (Rights Action)

14 August 2011 - Early in the morning, campesinos from the Movimiento Campesino Colonia Nueva Vida de Rigores (MCCNVR) occupied the Finca Panama, ten minutes from the community of Rigores in Trujillo, Colon. This peaceful action was part of their on-going efforts to claim lands they feel they have legal, legitimate claim to. According to local sources, the campesinos were quickly surrounded by approximately 120 soldiers from the 15th Army Battalion and approximately 40 security guards from the Orion Security Company employed by Dinant palm oil corporation. The security forces opened fire, killing 17-year-old campesino Javier Melgar - and also five security guards! Campesinos believe the soldiers confused the security guards and the campesinos, as some security guards were dressed as civilians and, also, the security guard uniform is difficult to distinguish from civilian clothing. Local informants report that all of the victims were killed by shots fired from military issued RPG-15 rifles. The same day in the nearby community of Guadalupe Carney, home to the Campesino Movement of the Aguán, 17-year-old

Lelis Lemus Martinez and 18-year-old Denis Israel Castro were beaten by police, arrested and charged with murder in what their neighbors claim are false, politically motivated charges. (Rights Action)

25 July 2011 - Carlos Maradiaga was entering the Revenue Department building in La Ceiba with other leaders of the farmers' cooperative Coapalma-Ecara of which he was president, to do paperwork, when 2 individuals on a motorcycle approached him and one of them snatched a chain he carried and then immediately killing him with 2 gunshots. (Resistencia Honduras)

23 July 2011 – Julián Alvarenga García, the 45-year-old father of 7 children and president of cooperative Isla I of the Nueva Marañones settlement (MUCA), on the left bank of Aguán River, was assassinated at about 11 am by unidentified individuals on a yellow motorcycle. Another farmer, Santos Dubón, who was with Julián was gravely wounded with gunshots. Julián's relatives said Julián had received repeated death threats by phone telling him to leave the farmers organization or they will kill him. (Rights Action)

16 July 2011 - Luis Alonso Ortiz Borjas, age 52 (father of five, three of them minors) and Constantino Morales Enamorado, age 32 (father of two toddlers). They were both members of the Cooperative Nueva Marañones, affiliated to the Unified Farmer Movement of Bajo Aguán (MUCA). Their bodies were riddled with 14 and 12 gun shots respectively. The peasants of the Bajo Aguán area denounce that masked men with AK-47 and R-15 rifles patrol the region with impunity. These people are troops dressed as civilians. (FIAN, Rights Action)

14 July 2011 – Radio journalist Nery Jeremías Orellana, age 26, was riding to the radio station Candelaria, Lempira Province near Honduras' border with El Salvador when unknown persons waiting for him shot him in the head. He was taken to emergency and died hours later. He was the director of Radio Joconguera (a anticoup commercial radio station), reporter for Radio Progreso, member of Honduras Community Radios Network, and was active in the Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular (FNRP) since the coup in June 2009. Minutes before he was murdered, he talked to Radio Progreso confirming he will go to the community radios meeting the next day. He was a member of the National Front of People's Resistance. The local priest, José Amílcar Lara, denounced through Radio Globo that he, Manuel Bonilla the town's mayor, and Hernán Castro, who also works in that Radio Station, have received death threats. (UNESCO, ABC News)



05 June 2011 - Campesinos José Recinos Aguilar, Joel Santamaría and Genaro Cuesta were murdered in the Aguán Valley by paramilitaries employed by landowners shot as they were driving a few meters from the San Esteban cooperative, of which they were members. The victims belonged to the Authentic Claimant Movement of Aguán Campesinos (MARCA), one of several campesino groups claiming land in the Aguán valley. The paramilitaries then went to the local offices of the government's National Agrarian Institute (INA) and shot at campesinos who had taken refuge there the year before. Five people were wounded, including the campesina Doris Pérez Vásquez, who was shot in the abdomen and had to be rushed to a hospital in the city of La Ceiba. (Adital (Brazil) 6/6/11, with information from FIAN, FGRP, Comuna Ataroa and Tiempo-San Pedro Sula)

24 May 2011 – Rock band musician Juan Angel Sorto, age 19 and a member of Artists in Resistance, was murdered at 9 pm in El Progreso, Yoro, by two men driving a motorcycle. Artists in Resistance attributed this murder to death squads. In 2010 COFADEH identified 34 political assassinations, 34 murders of campesinos in the context of land disputes, 28 murders from police abuse and 309 deaths of suspicious authorship. (Artists in Resistance, Western Sydney Peace Group/Westpeace)

18 May 2011 - Denis Moisés Lara Orellana, age 37 and Regional Secretary of the Asociación Nacional de Campesinos Hondureños (ANACH), was assassinated at 8:00 am as he left home in the Colonia Flor del Campo of Villanueva, Cortés. His body was riddled with bullets fired from an AK-47. His assassins drove a grey pick-up truck, which they abandoned. (La Tribuna, Westpeace)

18 May 2011 - Sixto Ramos, age 45, the Coordinator of the Aguán Popular Organizations (COPA) from of Nueva Suyapa Cooperative of the Campesino Movement the Aguán (MCA), was shot dead while driving when he was intercepted by unknown persons in another car. (Rights Action, Western Sydney Peace Group/Westpeace)

15 May 2011 - In the Aguán region, Francisco Pascual Lopez, a farmer from the MCA community of Rigores, was tending his cattle when, according to an eye witness, security guards working for Miguel Facussé

shot Pascual in his land, and then dragged him alive into the Finca Panama. The witness ran for help, and even though community members found a trail of blood police refused to enter the Finca Panama to locate the injured man. The Finca Panama belongs to Honduran palm oil businessman Miguel Facussé who over the past twenty years has acquired enormous extensions of land in the Aguán often through fraudulent, illegal and violent means. Campesino organizations in the region had been immersed for decades in legal and political processes for the recognition of their land rights. Following the June 28, 2009 military coup the political and legal processes hit the wall of impunity created as part of the coup, and communities began occupying lands. (Rights Action)

10 May 2011 – TV Journalist Héctor Francisco Medina Polanco, age 35, was shot dead as he was leaving Channel 9 news, Omega Vision, where he was General Coordinator. At the end of the news broadcast at 7:00 pm, Medina was followed by two men on a motorcycle and was shot three times in the back in front of his house in the neighborhood of Buenos Aires, in the municipality of Morazán, Yoro Department. A fourth shot hit his arm. He had worked for Omega Visión television station for six years reporting on the political and social situation in the area and had implicated public officials in acts of corruption. According to other sources consulted by C-Libre, the DNIC knows the names of the alleged hit men that murdered Héctor Medina Polanco as well as the amount of money they were allegedly paid for carrying out the assassination. In August 2011, this assassinated journalist's brother, Carlos Alberto Medina Polanco, reported that he has been receiving death threats via messages on his mobile phone. In the messages he has been told to stop demanding an investigation into his brother's death or he will "meet the same fate." He also noted that he has been followed by individuals on a motorcycle when he leaves the radio station for which he works in the city of San Pedro Sula. As a result, he has taken a temporary leave of absence from his position at the station. In addition, he reported that, on 10 June 2011, his 16-year-old daughter was kidnapped, assaulted and questioned about his activities for three hours. He said the National Criminal Investigations Department (Dirección Nacional de Investigación Criminal, DNIC) is aware of the incident involving his daughter. (C-Libre/IFEX)

10 May 2011 - Campesino José Paulino Lemus Cruz, of the “Brisas de Aden” cooperative belonging to the Campesino Movement of the Aguán (MCA) was shot dead from a passing motorcycle as he was walking to sell fish in Rio Claro. Other members of the group discounted robbery as a motive; none of the victim’s belongings appeared to have been taken. Supporters of the campesino movements say the two latest deaths bring the number of activists killed in the valley over the last 15 months to 27. (defensoresenlinea.com, Rights Action, News Update on the Americas)

07 May 2011 - Honduran campesino Henry Roney Díaz was killed on when soldiers, police and private guards tried to remove campesinos occupying an estate in the Aguán River Valley in the northern department of Colón. Díaz was a member of the El Despertar cooperative, one of the groups forming the Authentic Claimant Movement of Aguán Campesinos (MARCA). Manuel Vásquez, another member of the cooperative, was wounded in the same clash. Security guards were working for the wealthy Nicaraguan René Morales, one of the largest landowners in the region. Morales’ farms have been the target of several land occupations since April 30, when campesinos from MARCA and the larger Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (MUCA) decided to take over the La Trinidad, El Despertar, San Esteban and Guanchías estates to protest what they consider the government’s failure to comply with agreements signed in April 2010 [see Update #1029]. (Weekly News Update on the Americas, FIAN, Rights Action)

19 April 2011 - The bodies of Tarin Daniel Garcia Enamorado, age 26 years old and father of three children, was found decapitated, as was that of his father-in-law, Carlos Alberto Acosta Canales, father of five children, with his hands tied, were found in Ocotes Altos on the left bank of the Aguán River in the municipality of Trujillo. Both campesinos were members of the Movimiento Autentico Campesino del Aguan (MUCA). Tarin Daniel was a member of the cooperative, Productores de Colon, one of the four that make up the settlement “La Concepcion”. According to the spouse of one of the victims, they had left to go fishing on Thursday, April 14th at 3 pm with the promise to return the next day. When they did not return, their families and friends communicated with the police in Tocoa, Trujillo and in La Ceiba to find information. Reports from neighbors in the locale say that the victims had been captured by security guards of Reynaldo Canales and Rene Morales at the place

where the lands of these businessmen meet the Aguán River. (FIAN, Rights Action, hondurashumanrights.wordpress)

18 March 2011 - Ilse Ivania Velásquez Rodríguez, a 59-year old elementary school teacher and former principal in Tegucigalpa, was deliberately targeted with tear gas canister that directly hit her face at close range while participating in a massive teachers demonstration Tegucigalpa protesting the privatization plan for public education. She fell to the ground, unconscious, into an asphyxiating cloud of gas. The driver of a passing television truck, himself affected by the fumes, ran over her right side. She lay face down in a pool of blood seeping out from her body. Three hours later, she died in a hospital. She had rushed to the Presidential Palace to defend Zelaya the morning of the coup. She was one of hundreds of thousands of Hondurans who took to the streets for weeks to protest the new coup government of de facto President Roberto Micheletti -- who Honduras' oligarchs hoped would roll back Zelaya's mild leftward moves and resistance to further neoliberal privatization. Last summer she was one of thousands in the Honduran opposition who circulated petitions -- eventually signed by 1.25 million people, roughly one in three adults -- demanding a Constitutional Convention to re-found the country from below. (COFADEH)

19 February 2011 - Reina Elizabeth Veliz Varela, age 39 and FNRP leader living in the Colonia Las Pavas in Comayagüela, was killed at 9:30 pm by 2 gunmen after they invaded her home. According to an anonymous relative, Reina was at home fixing up her clothes when unidentified persons entered and fired shots at her without saying anything. She was killed in front of her 6-year-old daughter. (Sidney Says No to Honduras Coup)

11 February 2011 - Two influential campesino leaders in Honduras' Aguán valley were killed during a mid-afternoon attack on the region's principal highway. Freddy Gonzalez Castro, treasurer, and Rigoberto Fúnez, president, were leaders of the campesino Cooperative Prieta, which cultivates African palm for biofuel production. Both men died immediately after 15 heavy caliber bullets were fired into their truck.

Initial statements from the Honduran National Police say the men were returning from the bank with a large amount of money and the attack was a robbery. MCA leaders have told us that the Prieta co-operative is the

model they wish to emulate due to its democratic decision-making model and the benefits which its members receive: health insurance, better salaries, university scholarships for all children, etc... (Real News)

31 January 2011 - At 6pm, Dr. Jose Maria Turcios was assassinated when he travelled from an organizing meeting of the Resistance, at Quimistan, Santa Barbara. They waited for him and riddled him with bullets. His body was found the next morning with a shot in the forehead. Dr Turcios is ex director of the IHSS hospital. (Sydney Says No to the Honduras Coup)

15 January 2011 - Resistance member Jose Ricardo Dominguez Hernandez, age 42, was assassinated with his body found with several stab wounds. It looked like he was killed with an ice-cutter, his hands were a different color to the rest of his body and would have been tied with hemp or rope. He was previously detained on February 2010 with other resistance members after a protest and was a court witness in a kidnapping and torture case for 2 Globo TV journalists. He applied to the IACHR for cautionary measures and IACHR requested the Supreme Court for information about his situation but never received a response. (COFADEH, Sydney Says No to Honduras Coup)

02 January 2011 - Ermin Nabarro, Cooperativa La Aurora (MUCA) murdered on highway close to La Aurora Cooperative. (Rights Action, FIAN)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **61 Assassinations in 2010**

\*\*\*\*\*

01 December 2011 - José Luis Sanabria, age 45 and a teacher from Copan who was active in the labor movement and resistance, was kidnapped and disappeared on 30 December 2010 when he was driving to Quimistan, Santa Barbara. He was found dead two days later with a shot in the head and a decomposed body in Florida Copán. He was director of Carlos Roberto Reina School of Youth Western Institute, an educator of the regional pedagogical university, and a resistance activist. Police claim it was a car robbery; they have been dubbing literally all killings against resistance members as common delinquency, without investigation. (Sydney Says No to Honduras Coup)

29 November 2010 - Adelson Díaz Estévez was fishing in a river with his brother-in-law, a boy, when they were attacked by the private security guards of Miguel Facussé, who fired on them killing the young Adelson Diaz and wounding the boy, a minor, who was later taken to the hospital. The family presented themselves personally at the offices of the DNIC and the police. (COFADEH)

15 November 2010 - Raul Castillo, age 48, of the Cooperative 14 de mayo, Jose Luis Saucedo, age 25, of the Cooperative 14 de mayo, Ciriaco Munoz, age 50, of the Cooperativa Nueva Esperanza, Teodoro Acosta, age 39, of the Cooperativa Nueva Esperanza, Ignacio Reyes Garcia, age 50, of the Three United Families Cooperative – shot to death by Dinant security guards on the Finca El Tumbador. All of the victims were members of the MCA. (Rights Action, FIAN)

30 October 2011 (unconfirmed) Luís Antonio Hernández, leader in the teachers movement and active member of the FNRP, was stabbed to death in Sinuapa, Ocotepeque.

17 September 2010 – Trade unionist Juana Bustillo, age 49, a nurse for 20 years and 11 year president of the social security workers union SITRAIHSS, was shot by unknown assailants after leaving a union meeting in the city of San Pedro Sula and shortly following her participation in a demonstration organized by the resistance movement. (COFADEH)

15 September 2010 - Efraín López, who for many years sold lottery tickets in the central park of San Pedro Sula, was killed by teargas fired by the police as they attacked a concert and non-violent rally of the National People's Resistance Front FNRP in the San Pedro Sula central park (Rights Action)

10 September 2010 - A group of six men shot and killed campesino Francisco Miranda Ortega, age 55, at the place known as Cacho Guey as he rode his bike headed on the road from the La Aurora encampment where he lived to the city of Tocoa in the northern department of Colón. Miranda was a leader in the Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (MUCA), which represents thousands of campesinos in a land dispute in the Aguán River Valley. He is reportedly the 12th campesino to be

murdered since December 2009. (Weekly News Update on the Americas, Rights Action, FIAN)

10 September 2010 - Enrique Alfredo Larios Cruz, of the peasant association company "Unión Catracha" (MCA). Murdered alongside his companion Rodríguez Valdés, by firearm near the village Honduras Aguán, in the municipality of Trujillo. (FIAN)

28 August 2010 - Santos Remigio Ávila, age 45, General Secretary of the National Peasants Association of Honduras (ANACH) and a member of the National Popular Resistance Front, was murdered in Guaymaca, Francisco Morazán, at 10:00 pm as he arrived home from visiting his 5-year-old daughter at the Guaymaca hospital. He was murdered with a single shot to the head in front of his 14-year-old son as they were exiting their car. (Via Campesina, Friendship Office, defensoresenlinea.com)

24 August 2010 – Journalist Israel Zelaya Diaz, age 62 and host of a radio show which reported on national issues broadcast on Radio International, was found shot to death next to a sugarcane field near Villanueva along a rural road near the northern city of San Pedro Sula. Unidentified gunmen shot him twice in the head and once in the chest, leaving his money and personal belongings untouched. Rights Action reports that prior to being murdered, Zelaya Diaz had suffered threats for his opposition to the coup. (CPJ, Rights Action)

18 August 2010 – Victor Manuel Mata Oliva, age 40, Rodving Omar Villegas, age 15, Sergio Madiel Amaya, age 18, and a boy Roldin Marel Villeda, age 15 from the La Aurora Cooperative were assassinated the left bank of the Rio Aguán between El Bridge and the Panama Cooperative in the municipality of Trujillo, department of Colon as they drove to Tocoa for a meeting. According to witnesses, they were fired upon by security guards riding in blue double cabin pick up truck. AR-15 and AK-47 bullet shells were found at the crime scene. The assassinated men were members of the Campesino Corporation of San Esteban and of the Unified Campesino Movement of Aguán (MUCA). MUCA attributed these murders to security guards of wealthy landowner Miguel Facussé. (Rights Action, MUCA, FIAN)

09 August 2010 - Esteban García Cruz, age 45, from the Cooperativa 25 de Abril (MUCA) was murdered by unknown individuals driving a white SUV vehicle. (FIAN, Rights Action)

04 July 2010 - Roger Antonio Fúnez Flores was shot to death at about 6 am in El Progreso as he was bicycling to the agricultural market as he did each Sunday morning. Two men on a motorcycle fired at him, hitting him in the leg, and then killing him with 4 bullets to the head. Funes was a leader of the FNRP in El Progreso, and a regular commentator on Radio Progreso. Roger was president of the neighborhood council (patronato) of La Colonia 18 de Septiembre. He had two daughters. (Radio Progreso)

30 June 2010 (unconfirmed) - Jorge Alberto Castro Ramírez, age 41, a horchata vendor in the numerous FNRP marches of 2009, was assassinated. (Honduras Culture & Politics, COFADEH)

20 June 2010 – Oscar Yovani Ramírez, age 17, belonged to the San Esteban cooperative (MARCA). He was tortured and murdered in the midst of an assault on the Aurora MUCA land reform community carried out by National Police Cobra agents, the Preventative Police and the Orion company's security guards of wealthy businessman Miguel Facussé. The attached photo of Mr. Ramírez' tortured, dead body was personally presented to CRLN by a leader of the six MUCA land reform communities. That same day, five others from the community were taken captive by the police, and at least some of them reportedly tortured before being released some time later after the Aguán communities amassed at the police station. (CRLN, FIAN, Rights Action)

20 June 2010 - Mauricio Nahún González Coello, son of labor leader Mauro Francisco González, was killed by unknown men as he went through a car wash. (May I Speak Freely)

15 June 2010 - Rolando Valenzuela, former minister of the National Program for Sustainable Rural Development under Manuel Zelaya and an active member of Liberals in Resistance, was shot and killed as he left a restaurant. The shooter was identified as Carlos Alberto Yacamán Meza, a businessman with whom Valenzuela allegedly had a dispute over money. The prosecutor's office eventually released an order of capture for Yacamán Meza on June 23. (May I Speak Freely)



10 June 2010 - Unknown gunmen shot and killed Oscar Molina, brother-in-law of Beverages Workers' Union (Stibys) Vice President Porfirio Ponce. Stibys is active in the FNRP Resistance leadership. Molina was in a car with Ponce's sister and father, neither of whom was gravely injured under the hail of bullets. Members of Stibys have been consistently harassed since the coup. (May I Speak Freely)

29 May 2010 - Agustín Bustillo, age 40, from the Cooperativa Camarones (MUCA). Disappeared on May 24 and found dead five days later on the banks of the Aguán River. (FIAN)

18 May 2010 - Olayo Hernandez Sorto, 38, a member of The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) and comunal secretary of the Popular Resistance Front against the coup in the community of Pueblo Viejo, Colomoncagua Municipality, Department of Intibucá, was assassinated at about 6.00 pm in Llano Grande, Colomoncagua, Intibucá, by hit men with three 3.80-caliber pistol shots. One struck him on the chest, the other on the knee and the other on the back. The body of Olayo found in Los Quebrachitos also showed a stab wound to the head probably perpetrated with a machete. It should be noted that he had been accused of being in the resistance and taken up arms because his job was repairing weapons for which he had the relevant permit. Olayo Hernandez Sorto leaves behind a wife and five children. (COPINH, hondurashumanrights.com, defensoresenlínea.com, COFADEH)

13 May 2010 – Gilberto Alexander Nuñez Ochoa, age 27, and José Andrés Oviedo, age 26, were shot dead inside a home in the Colonia Cruz Roja 2 at kilometer 11. Since June 28, 2009, Nuñez consistently participated in mobilizations of the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP), serving in the Security and Discipline Committee, where he helped identify military or police infiltrators whose goal was to 1) photograph protesters and 2) provoke the police commandos by attacking private and public facilities and establish chaos. Nuñez had also spent two months accompanying President Manuel Zelaya in the Embassy of Brazil, where Mr. Zelaya took refuge after he returned to the country on September 21, 2009 (IACHR, HRW)

08 May 2010 - Masked gunmen killed Adalberto Figueroa, an environmentalist and local resistance leader in the Olancho region, while

he was collecting firewood a kilometer from his house. On May 03, Figueroa had filed a complaint with the National Institute on Conservation and Forestry Development against an illegal logging operation on protected lands as well as threats with illegal weapons made by logging companies against local community members. The Olancho Environmental Movement, of which Figueroa was a part, suspects that the logging companies affected by the complaint hired Figueroa's killers. (May I Speak Freely, Junta Directiva Movimiento Ambientalista de Olancho, SOA Watch)

29 April 2010 - Miriam Yaneth Romero Domínguez, age 44, a media education teacher living in the Colonia San Carlos de Sula de San Pedro Sula, was assassinated in front of her home as she was closing the outside door (el portón). The unknown assailant had hidden himself behind an electric post. He shot her twice before fleeing. (COFADEH)

26 May 2010 - Unknown gunmen shot and killed in Tegucigalpa Pedro Antonio Gomez and Oscar Tulio Martinez, respectively the brother and brother-in-law of Arcadia Gomez, minister of social affairs in the government of former president Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya. The NGO Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Honduras (CODEH) reported that Antonio Gomez and Martinez were active in the Resistance, and that gunmen had entered the house asking for Arcadia Gomez. CODEH attributed the murders to "death squads," saying it had information that there were groups within the state security agencies who were following opponents of the current government. (May I Speak Freely, US State Dept HR Report)

20 April 2010 - Television journalist Jorge Alberto Orellana, age 50, also known as "Georgino," was shot by an unidentified gunman as he was leaving Televisión de Honduras studios around 9:00 p.m in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Orellana hosted the program "En Vivo con Georgino" (Georgino Live), which focused on local news, mostly related to cultural events, José Peraza, a reporter with Radio Progreso in San Pedro Sula, told CPJ. Orellana did not report on sensitive stories such as organized crime, Tiempo Editor Rubén Escobar said. Before joining Televisión de Honduras, Orellana had worked for the newspaper La Prensa and the country's leading network Televicentro. After the coup in June 2009, Orellana left Televicentro because of discomfort with the station's editorial position in support of the coup government. Orellana was also a

journalism professor at the National University of Honduras in San Pedro Sula. (CPJ)

13 April 2010 – W105 radio journalist Luis Antonio Chévez Hernández, age 22, was assassinated as he got out of his car in front of his home by unidentified gunmen in the city of San Pedro Sula. He was the sixth Honduran journalist killed this year. Robbery was ruled out as a motive. (UNESCO, Reporters w/o Borders)

07 April 2010 – José Leonel Guerra Alvarez, age 32, from La Confianza Cooperativa (MUCA) in the Aguán was shot to death by 5 bullets. Two individuals got off a motorcycle and shot him inside his house in front of his wife and children. (Rights Action, FIAN, CEJIL)

01 April 2010 – The body of Edy Gabriel Betancourt, age 23, was found in El Paraiso, and kidnapped in Comayaguela on 27/12/10. He was outside his home when a double-cabin pick-up with polarized windows and no number plates parked in front of him and 4 hooded men came out saying they are police and came to capture him. His family rushed out to stop them from taking him but they showed the family a capture order and took him to an unknown place. His family searched for him everywhere. Edy is a first year university student at UNAH. No further information is available because his family is afraid to denounce; his death is denounced by FNRP as political. (Sydney Says No to Honduran Coup)

01 April 2010 - Miguel Angel Alonso Oliva, age 22, from the Cooperativa Guanchias in Aguán was shot in the back at 6:00 am by a security guard of the oil palm plantations in the Aguán Valley, when a peasant group from the Unified Peasant Movement of Aguán (MUCA) was occupying land in the Boleros farm held by René Morales. The Aguán Valley is living under extreme tension caused by the mobilization of military, police, and security guards hired by businessmen involved in the land dispute with the MUCA. According to information obtained so far, farmers fear that the mobilization of military, police, and heavily armed guards plans to evict people from the land on the left bank of the Aguán River. The threatened settlements include: Suyapa del Aguán, Guanchías, Buenos Amigos, Remolino, Despertar, Trinidad, San Esteban, Quebrada Honda, Paso Aguán, El Plantel, Islas 1 and 2, Marañones, and Bolero. (Rights Action, FIAN, Honduras Human Rights Wordpress)

28 March 2010 – Dr. Yorleny Yadira Sánchez Rivas, age 33, who was wounded with hit men murdered journalist Nahún Palacios in Tocoa on 14 March, died at a clinic in San Pedro Sula which she had entered because of convulsions. (voselsoberano.com, COFADEH)

27 March 2010 – Journalists José Bayardo Mairena Ramírez and Manuel Juárez working on the news program “This is Olancho” on Channel 4, were shot by men in another vehicle on the highway while they were driving to work. The two reporters strongly questioned the coup d'etat carried out June 28, 2009 and also had systematically denounced the human rights violations carried out by the army and police against citizens in resistance on their Olancho radio program. (United Nations, Comité por la Libre Expresión/C-Libre)

23 March 2010 – Jose Manuel Flores, a prominent FNRP member and a Social Sciences teacher, was assassinated at the San Jose del Pedregal High School in front of his students by a death squad comprised of heavily armed men wearing ski masks and civilian clothes. This incident left behind key evidence for investigation, arrest and prosecution, since as the assassins fled, the ski mask of one of the attackers became entangled in the razor coil over the fence which they had cut open to look for their victim. (COFADEH)

17 March 2010 – Francisco Castillo, age 50, a member of the FNRP, and a friend and associate of priest Fr. Andres Tamayo, was assassinated in La Residencial Las Uvas de Comayagüela, Tegucigalpa. Fr. Tamayo was expelled from Honduras by the Michelleti coup government in 2009. Previously, Mr. Castillo and his spouse had been unlawfully detained in September 2009 and harassed again in December 2009. (COFADEH)

17 March 2010 - Jose Antonio Cardoza and Jose Concepcion Carias, both around age 50, were killed at noon by unidentified individuals who opened fire with a shotgun as the campesinos were driving home after a day's work in the Carbonal community, Bonito Oriental, Colon Department. The two farmers were leaders in the Brisas Cooperative of COHDEFOR, and had received death threats from the alleged land owner, Carlos Diaz, who is represented by a legal representative, said officials of the National Agrarian Institute (INA) in Tocoa, Colón department, on Friday, March 12. The INA presented a complaint before

the Public Prosecutor's Office. About 25 families occupy and inhabit the past 4 years about 60 acres that were once property of the Honduran Forest Development Corporation, or COHDEFOR. (COFADEH)

14 March 2010 – Journalist Nahún Ely Palacios Arteaga, age 36, was killed instantly after assassins in two vehicles fired 47 bullets into his car – with 14 striking him. His partner, Yorlenny Yadira Sánchez Rivas, was also seriously injured and died two weeks later as a consequence of the attack (see 28 Mar 11 above). Nahún Palacios was news director of Channel 5 in the Aguán Valley, and hosted a news program on Radio Tocoa. He covered drugs, politics, and an ongoing conflict between landowners and peasant farmers in the Aguán. In the weeks before the murder, Nahún Palacios, who had been granted precautionary measures by the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR), reported on the agrarian conflict in Bajo Aguán from a balanced perspective, openly questioning several media outlets' campaigns to stigmatize and defame the peasant movements. Palacios reportedly received threats from members of the Honduran military in June 2009 for critical coverage of the 2009 Honduran coup. (COFADEH)

12 March 2010 - Ramón Ulises Castellanos and Miguel Saucedo, field workers in the Naranjo neighborhood in the Department of Atlántida, were assassinated by death squads working for wealthy landowners trying to re-occupy lands that President Zelaya had redistributed to small farmers. (WFP)

11 March 11 2010 – Journalist David Enrique Meza Montesinos, age 51, a reporter on El Patio radio station for more than 30 years, was shot dead in his car by unidentified men who followed him in another vehicle. The journalist was chased by his murderers, reportedly in a double cab vehicle. When he tried to evade them, he was hit and shot a few yards from his home at about 5:20 pm. (Committee to Protect Journalists/CPJ)

01 March 2010 (date unconfirmed) - Bessy Pamela Cerrato Banegas, was murdered in Yucarán, El Paraíso. Her body bore machete wounds and signs of torture. She is the daughter of Arminda Banegas, member of the Eighth Section of the Bottling Workers Union, STIBYS, and member of the FNRP. COFADEH note on 01 Nov 2001: Six months have passed since this criminal act and the Public Prosecutor's Office has not prosecuted those responsible. (COFAHEH)

February 24, 2010 –Claudia Larissa Brizuela, age 36, responding to a knock on the door of her home in San Pedro Sula, was shot at point-blank range numerous times in the chest, killing her instantly. Her two sons, ages 2 and 8, witnessed the brutal assassination from inside the home. Claudia was a member of the FNPP, and the daughter of Pedro Brizuela, a prominent member of the resistance who had recently spoken out against the Lobo administration. The killing occurred on the eve of a large rally of in Tegucigalpa denouncing the coup and human rights abuses. (COFADEH)

17 February 2011 - Dara Gudiel, age 17, was found hanged in the city of Danlí, in the department of Paraíso. Dara Gudiel was the daughter of journalist Enrique Gudiel, who runs a radio program called “Siempre al Frente con el Frente” (“Always Upfront with the Front”), which broadcasts information about the resistance. Days before she was found hanged, Dara Gudiel had been released after having been kidnapped and held for two days, during which time she was alleged to have been physically mistreated. (IACHR, COFADEH)

15 February 2010 - Julio Fúnez Benítez, age 57, of the sanitation workers union (SANAA) was gunned down in the Brisas de Olancho neighborhood around 6:00 pm by two hit men who were wearing baseball hats on a motorcycle. Fúnez Benítez was always at the head of all the marches and activities with the National Front of Popular Resistance, FNRP. The previous weekend, he had participated in the first FNRP assembly, which took place in Siguatepeque. According friends and family, he had received several death threats where he was told that if he didn't remove himself from the Front, they would kill him. (COFADEH, Defensores en Línea, Honduras Culture & Politics, The Nation)

14 February 2010 - Feliciano Santos, age 40, from the Cooperativa 21 de Julio died of 2 bullet wounds while walking towards the recovered lands occupied by René Morales, on the right bank of the Aguán River to lands in dispute. (Rights Action, FIAN)

04 February 2010 - Francisco Montes, age 45, and Isidro Cano, age 45, from the Cooperativa Buenos Amigos, died due to wounds suffered in a vehicle crash, in which they were trying to escape from armed men who were shooting at them from another vehicle. (CEJIL, FIAN, Rights Action)

04 February 2010 - Isidro Santos, from the Cooperativa Occidental, Died in car crash while fleeing from armed men shooting at them from another car. (Rights Action)

04 February 2010 – Vanesa Yaneth Zepeda Alonzo, age 29, a nurse still dressed in her scrubs, was killed by a bullet turning up dead in the Loarque neighborhood of Tegucigalpa. Zepeda had young children and was a leader of the SITRAIHSS labor union (Workers Union for the Honduran Social Security Institute). She had been abducted that afternoon while leaving a union meeting. (COFADEH)

31 January 2010 - Juan Ramon Mejia, age 60, from the Cooperativa Occidental (MUCA), died due to multiple contusions suffered when hit by a vehicle that was following him. (Rights Action, FIAN, CEJIL)

Mid-January 2010 – Blas Lopez, a teacher and leader of the Pech ethnic group, was murdered in the village of Carbonal. He was an active member of the resistance. (COFADEH, Honduras Human Rights)

DISAPPEARED IN 2011 & 2010:

30 August 2011 - José Reynaldo Cruz Palma, president of the Community Council (Patronato) of Planeta Neighbourhood in San Pedro Sula. According to his family members he was kidnapped by agents of the DNIC and Preventative Police when he was travelling by public transport along with his wife Nubia Carvajal between La Lima, Cortés and their home in the neighborhood of Planeta. The bus he was riding in was intercepted by various agents of both police forces who were driving in two vehicles, one was a grey Mazda double-cab pick-up truck with the partial license plate BP50 and the other was a patrol vehicle of the Preventative Police. The uniformed agents got on the bus, said to his wife that the problem was not with her but with her partner, and took him by force. (COFADEH)

21 August 2011 - Oscar Elías López Muñoz, age 49, was kidnapped by masked men around 5:00 AM on Sunday August 21st in the Suyapa neighborhood of Chamelecón in the North of Honduras. The men arrived in three cars and broke down the doors of his home, where López Muñoz was with his wife and ten year-old daughter. They said they were agents

of the National Department of Criminal Investigation (DNIC). They were wearing hoods and ski masks. (COFADEH)

02 August 2011 - Mauricio Joel Urbino Castro, age 34, worked as a taxi driver of taxi number 248 in the city of Ceiba in the department of Atlántida. He was having a problem with the electrical system of the car. At approximately 4:30 pm, he arrived at a garage that specialized in electrical repairs in the San José neighborhood of Ceiba to repair the vehicle. At about the same time four men whose faces were covered with ski masks, of large and muscular build, who were carrying long and short-barreled weapons, identified themselves as police and immediately ordered all present inside the garage to get on the ground, shouting "we're the police – hit the floor!" while they kicked the garage owner. They then proceeded to beat Mauricio Joel Urbino Castro, fastened his hands behind him, and violently removed him from the garage, forcing him into a grey double-cab pick-up truck with heavily tinted windows and without license plate which was waiting in the street. He has not been seen since and his cell phone has never been answered since. (COFADEH)

11 June 2011 - Kelvin Omar Andrade Hernández, age 18, son of political exile Dagoberto Andrade, mysteriously disappeared on when he went out to ride his motorcycle in the neighborhood of Bella Vista in Catacamas, department of Olancho. He has not appeared since. (COFADEH)

21 May 2011 - Olvin Gallegos y Segundo Gómez were abducted in the Aguán valley in the afternoon by private security guards operating as paramilitaries while the two were traveling by bicycle from the "San Esteban" farm to the "El Despertar" farm when they were intercepted by paramilitaries as they were crossing the finca "El Mochito", a palm oil plantation. At about 3 pm, the community went to look for the missing men at the Empresa Impalma palm oil processing plant of landowner Reynaldo Canales located in the finca El Mochito. There, they found two police patrols numbering some 32 policemen and two Army command groups numbering about 100 soldiers who were caring for the plant. All were masked. They asked for the chief of security for the Empresa Impalma, who denied that the disappeared men were there. They remain disappeared. (Rights Action, Radio Progreso)



15 May 2011 - Francisco Pascual López of the Rigores agricultural cooperative in Tocoa, Colón, is disappeared since May 15, 2011. (COFADEH)

21 February 2011 - Today 350 teachers were cruelly repressed when they carried out a protest against the violation of their rights in the city of La Ceiba, Honduras. The first reports are that in addition to the usual pepper gas, the teachers have been viciously beaten and many have been detained. Among the detained is the union leader Franklin Padilla, whose current whereabouts are unknown. (USLEAP)

07 February 2011 - Samuel Josué Pastrana Molina was kidnapped at 2:30 when armed men with ski masks entered the place he was in the department of El Paraíso, ordered those who were with him to place themselves on the ground and close their eyes, and they took him away. (COFADEH)

**AT LEAST 10 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DISAPPEARED BY POLICE FORCES UNDER PORFIRIO LOBO'S REGIME**

20 July 2010 - Luís Alexander Torres Casaleno, detained by police agents while driving his motorcycle, after having passed a police checkpoint on the Corocito highway towards Tocoa, Colón. A few kilometers passed the checkpoint he was detained by four agents of the Preventative Police who were riding in a white unmarked double-cab pick-up truck and crossed in front of him on the highway. Two agents in uniform got out of the truck and put him into the vehicle, leaving his motorcycle behind. The motorcycle was retrieved by the Corocito police shortly afterwards. A habeas corpus was filed in his name and there has been no response to date. (COFADEH)

15 July 2010 - Vilmar Edmundo Talavera Avilez, a police officer, was detained by the Border Police (Policía de Frontera y Análisis) when he was riding a bus. He was detained after presenting his identification documents. Before his disappearance he was reportedly threatened by a police officer by the name of Tercero.

13 July 2010 - Denis Alexander Russel, age 19, was captured in an operation of the Special Anti-Kidnapping Taskforce (GEAS). The operation was commanded by Vice Minister of Security Armando

Calidonio and police spokesperson Juan Rochez. His mother, Carlota Anariva, denounced that the day he was taken away he had been with her buying groceries, and when they returned to the house she left him to park the car and suddenly the neighbours came to tell her that her son had been taken away. He was a student in the Instituto de la Patria in La Lima, Department of Cortés. (COFADEH)

13 June 2010 - Osmin Obando Cáceres, age 22, son of Eliodoro Cáceres, Coordinator of the National Popular Resistance Front (FNRP) in Tela, department of Atlántida, has been disappeared since Sunday, June 13, 2010 at 4:30 PM when he was driving his taxi and told his family that he couldn't speak to them by phone because he was surrounded by police. The taxi appeared abandoned that same day around 6:30PM in the community of Los Cedros, in the jurisdiction of Tela. After his disappearance, the family received false calls, one caller claiming that Osmin was in the hospital in Tela and another that claimed that he was dead in the community of Las Palmas. Relatives went to verify each of the calls and neither was true. (COFADEH)

#### CRITICALLY WOUNDED:

05 October 2011 - Two leaders of the La Aurora settlement, members of the Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (MUCA), Pedro Alfredo Matamoros Bonilla and Heder Jael Sánchez Cruz, were shot at 10:30 am by unknown parties at the San Isidro, Sinaloa farm in the Bajo Aguán. According to a preliminary analysis of the actions, the shots fired at the two leaders of MUCA, who are currently hospitalized in serious condition, came from the African Palm plantations of the San Isidro farm, property of landholder and palm producer Miguel Facussé. MUCA leader Jonny Rivas noted that Pedro Alfredo Matamoros Bonilla was shot with three bullets, one of which entered his mouth and exited through his ear. Heder Jael Sánchez Cruz was shot twice in the groin. "They were driving by the San Isidro farm, which is under permanent vigilance by Miguel Facussé's security guards, who shot from there at the vehicle. There is no doubt which side of the highway they were attacked from; it was from the plantation. Pedro Matamoros is gravely wounded and his life is in danger," Rivas stated.

01 March 2011 - Two unidentified men pulled in front of union member Eduardo Argueta Santos' house in a taxi and asked him to hand them his

cellular phone, at which point one took out a gun and shot him. Santos was critically injured and remains in the hospital. (USLEAP)

25 May 2010 - Two unidentified individuals shot into the STIBYS headquarters of San Pedro Sula, gravely injuring Douglas Ramón Gomez Torres. (USLEAP)

29 July 2011 - Nelson Eliberto Lopez Reyes, vicepresidente de la Seccional de Sabá, Colón, fue ultimado de varios disparos por tres hombres armados que actuaron con alevosía, premeditación y ventaja. (USLEAP reported Nelson as killed, but there is no confirmation of this by other sources.)

[Report assembled by: Gary Cozette, Program Director, Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America, [gcozette@crln.org](mailto:gcozette@crln.org). Updated: 12 November 2011]

\*\*\*\*\*

**HONDURAS: AMERICA'S GREAT FOREIGN POLICY DISGRACE**  
**First, the US backed a coup that deposed the elected president.**  
**Now, it's backing the return of death-squad government**  
By Mark Weisbrot, guardian.co.uk, 18 November 2011

Imagine that an opposition organiser were murdered in broad daylight in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador or Venezuela by masked gunmen, or kidnapped and murdered by armed guards of a well-known supporter of the government. It would be front page news in the New York Times, and all over the TV news. The US State Department would issue a strong statement of concern over grave human rights abuses. If this were ever to happen.

Now imagine that 59 of these kinds of political killings had taken place so far this year, and 61 the previous year. Long before the number of victims reached this level, this would become a major foreign policy issue for the United States, and Washington would be calling for international sanctions.

But we are talking about Honduras, not Bolivia or Venezuela. So, when President Porfirio Lobo of Honduras came to Washington last month, President Obama greeted him warmly and said:

"Two years ago, we saw a coup in Honduras that threatened to move the country away from democracy, and in part because of pressure from the international community, but also because of the strong commitment to democracy and leadership by President Lobo, what we've been seeing is a restoration of democratic practices and a commitment to reconciliation that gives us great hope."

Of course, President Obama refused to even meet with the democratically elected president who was overthrown in the coup that he mentioned, even though that president came to Washington three times seeking help after the coup. That was Manuel Zelaya, a left-of-center president who was overthrown by the military and conservative segments of society in Honduras after instituting a number of reforms that people had voted for, such as raising the minimum wage and laws promoting land reform.

But what angered Washington most was that Zelaya was close to the left governments of South America, including Venezuela. He wasn't any closer to Venezuela than Brazil or Argentina was, but this was a crime of opportunity. So, when the Honduran military overthrew Zelaya in June of 2009, the Obama administration did everything it could for the next six months to make sure that the coup succeeded.

The "pressure from the international community" that Obama referred to in the above statement came from other countries, mainly the left-of-center governments in South America. The United States was on the other side, fighting – ultimately successfully – to legitimise the coup government through an "election" that the rest of the hemisphere refused to recognise.

In May of this year, Zelaya stated publicly what most of us who followed the events closely already guessed was true: that Washington was behind the coup and helped bring it about. While no one will likely bother to investigate the US role in the coup, this is quite plausible given the overwhelming circumstantial evidence.

Porfirio Lobo took office in January 2010, but most of the hemisphere refused to recognise the government because his election took place under conditions of serious human rights violations. In May 2011, an agreement was finally brokered in Cartagena, Colombia which allowed Honduras back into the Organisation of American States. But the Lobo government has not complied with its part of the Cartagena accords, which included human rights guarantees for the political opposition.

Here are two of the dozens of political killings that have occurred during Lobo's presidency, as compiled by the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN):

"Pedro Salgado, vice-president of the Unified Campesino Movement of Aguán (MUCA), was shot then beheaded at about 8.00pm at his home in the La Concepción empresa cooperativa. His spouse, Reina Irene Mejía, was also shot to death at the same time. Pedro suffered a murder attempt in December 2010 [...] Salgado, like the presidents of all the cooperatives claiming rights to land used by African palm oil businessmen in the Aguán, had been subject to constant death threats since the beginning of 2011."

The courage of these activists and organisers in the face of such horrific violence and repression is amazing. Many of the killings over the past year have been in the Aguán Valley in the north-east, where small farmers are struggling for land rights against one of Honduras' richest landowners, Miguel Facussé. He is producing biofuels in this region on disputed land. He is close to the United States and was an important backer of the 2009 coup against Zelaya. His private security forces, together with US-backed military and police, are responsible for the political violence in the region.

US aid to the Honduran military has increased since the coup. Recent US diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks show that US officials have been aware since 2004 that Facussé has also been trafficking large quantities of cocaine.

Dana Frank, a professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz who is an expert on Honduras, summed it up for the Nation last month: "US 'drug war' funds and training, in other words, are being used to support a known drug trafficker's war against campesinos."

The US militarisation of the drug war in the region is also pushing Honduras down the disastrous path of Mexico, in a country that already has one of the highest murder rates in the world. The New York Times reports that 84% of cocaine that reaches the US now crosses through Central America, as compared to 23% in 2006, when Calderón took office in Mexico and launched his drug war. The Times also notes that "American officials say the 2009 coup kicked open the door to [drug] cartels" in Honduras.

When I voted for Barack Obama in 2008, I never thought that his legacy in Central America would be the return of death-squad government, of the kind that Ronald Regan so vigorously supported in the 1980s. But that seems to be the case for Honduras.

The Obama administration has so far ignored pressure from Democratic members of Congress to respect human rights in Honduras. These efforts will continue, but Honduras needs help from the South. It was South America that spearheaded the efforts to reverse the 2009 coup. Although Washington ultimately defeated them, they cannot abandon Honduras while people no different from their friends and supporters at home are being murdered by a US-backed government.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS**

for indigenous and campesino organizations working for community-controlled development, environmental justice, human rights & justice in Guatemala & Honduras (and also in Chiapas & el Salvador), 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: [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)

In Canada:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/DonationDetails.aspx?cookieCheck=true>

In USA:

<https://npo.networkforgood.org/Donate/Donate.aspx?npoSubscriptionId=488>

FOR DONATION OF STOCK: Stock donations can be done anonymously. Have your stockbroker contact [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

## **DELEGATIONS TO GUATEMALA AND/OR HONDURAS**

### **1- HONDURAS, JANUARY 6-15, 2012, "ACCOMPANIMENT & FOOD SOVEREIGNTY DELEGATION"**

Sponsored by the Alliance for Global Justice, join AfGJ Coordinator Chuck Kaufman, Karen Spring (long-time Honduras human rights accompanier with Rights Action) and Tanya Kerssen (food policy analyst from Food First). For an application: [AFGJ@AFGJ.org](mailto:AFGJ@AFGJ.org)

### **2- HONDURAS & GUATEMALA, JANUARY 2012, "MINING, BIOFUELS & MILITARIZATION: US MILITARY AID & CANADIAN-AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS"**

Sponsored by Rights Action, join Annie Bird (Rights Action co-director). For information: [annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org), 202-680-3002

### **3- GUATEMALA, MARCH 10-17, 2012, "DAMS, MINING & AFRICAN PALM PRODUCTION –versus– COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS"**

Sponsored by Rights Action, join Grahame Russell (Rights Action co-director). For information: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 860-352-2448

## **RIGHTS ACTION**

Since 1995, Rights Action has been funding and working to eliminate the underlying causes of poverty, environmental destruction, repression, racism and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in Chiapas (Mexico) and El Salvador. The Canadian Rights Action Foundation, founded in 1999, is independent from and works in conjunction with Rights Action (USA) that was founded originally in 1983. Since 1995, Grahame Russell and Annie Bird have been co-directors of Rights Action. Since 1999, Grahame is founder and director of Rights Action (Canada).

Rights Action:

- funds and works with community-based organizations implementing their own development, environmental justice, human rights and disaster relief projects

- educates about and is involved in activism aimed at critically understanding and changing unjust north-south, global economic, military and political relationships

**MORE INFORMATION:**

[info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

Please re-post this

Get on-off Rights Action's listserv: [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)

Follow Rights Action on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org](http://www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org)