

## **Hillary Clinton “Is Baldly Lying” Concerning Role in Honduran Military Coup**

<http://us9.campaign-archive1.com/?u=ea011209a243050dfb66dff59&id=24cc15d99b>

**Serious questions must be asked by the US and Canadian media about the role that US and Canadian government officials played in supporting and legitimizing the 2009 military coup?**

**Below:**

- “Hear Hillary Clinton Defend Her Role in Honduras Coup When Questioned by Juan González”, Democracy Now, April 13, 2016
- "She's Baldly Lying": Dana Frank Responds to Hillary Clinton's Defense of Her Role in Honduras Coup, Democracy Now, April 13, 2016

In 2009, the US and Canadian media, for the most part, did misleading reporting on the US and Canadian-backed military coup in Honduras. Since then, the media – with exceptions – has done further misleading reporting on how Honduras has become the most murderous and repressive country in the Americas, characterized by endemic corruption and impunity.

The March 2, 2016 assassination of Berta Cáceres, and attempted assassination of Gustavo Castro, was simply and brutally the most recent of hundreds of political killings since the coup.

Below, Juan Gonzalez puts serious questions to Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton about the role she played in support of the military coup, while Secretary of State under President Obama. Serious questions must be asked by the US and Canadian media about the role that US and Canadian government officials played in supporting and legitimizing the 2009 military coup?

### **Canadian Delegation at the International Gathering Celebrating Life of Berta Cáceres**

Rights Action director Grahame Russell is currently in Honduras, with this delegation of Canadians: <http://www.rightsaction.org/action-content/canadian-delegation-participate-international-gathering-celebrating-life-bertha>

**Contact:**

- In Honduras: Grahame Russell, Rights Action, 011 (504) 9848-4633, [grahame@rightsaction.org](mailto:grahame@rightsaction.org)
- In Ottawa: Jen Moore, Latin America Program Coordinator, MiningWatch Canada, (613) 722-0412

- In Montreal: Marie Eve Marleau, Coordinator, Committee for Human Rights in Latin America (CDHAL), (514) 257-8710 x 334

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## **“Hear Hillary Clinton Defend Her Role in Honduras Coup When Questioned by Juan González”**, Democracy Now, April 13, 2016 [http://www.democracynow.org/2016/4/13/hear\\_hillary\\_clinton\\_defend\\_her\\_role](http://www.democracynow.org/2016/4/13/hear_hillary_clinton_defend_her_role)

AMY GOODMAN: With the New York primary less than a week away, the race for the Democratic nomination continues to heat up. Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders will meet Thursday in Brooklyn for their first debate in over a month. We begin today’s show looking at Hillary Clinton and Honduras. Earlier this week, the former secretary of state publicly defended her role in the 2009 coup in Honduras, when the military seized democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya in the middle of the night, deposed him and sent him into exile. Since the coup, Honduras has become one of the most violent places in the world. Clinton was asked about Honduras during a meeting with the New York Daily News editorial board on Saturday. The question was posed by Democracy Now!’s Juan González.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Secretary Clinton, I’d like to ask you, if I can, about Latin America—

HILLARY CLINTON: Yes, Juan, yes.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: —and a policy specifically that you were directly involved in: the coup in Honduras.

HILLARY CLINTON: Mm-hmm.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: As you know, in 2009, the military overthrew President Zelaya.

HILLARY CLINTON: Right.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: There was a period there where the OAS was trying to isolate that regime. But the—apparently, some of the emails that have come out as a result of State Department releases show that some of your top aides were urging you to declare it a military coup, cut off U.S. aid. You didn’t do that.

HILLARY CLINTON: Mm-hmm.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: You ended up negotiating with Óscar Arias a deal for new elections.

HILLARY CLINTON: Mm-hmm, right.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: But the situation in Honduras has continued to deteriorate.

HILLARY CLINTON: Right.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: There’s been a few hundred people killed by government forces. There’s been all these children fleeing, and mothers, from Honduras over the border into the United States. And just a few weeks ago, one of the leading environmental activists, Berta Cáceres, was assassinated in her home.

HILLARY CLINTON: Right, right.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Do you have any concerns about the role that you played in that particular situation, not necessarily being in agreement with your top aides in the State Department?

HILLARY CLINTON: Well, let me again try to put this in context. The Legislature—or the national Legislature in Honduras and the national judiciary actually followed the law in removing President Zelaya. Now, I didn't like the way it looked or the way they did it, but they had a very strong argument that they had followed the Constitution and the legal precedents. And as you know, they really undercut their argument by spiriting him out of the country in his pajamas, where they sent, you know, the military to, you know, take him out of his bed and get him out of the country.

So this was—this began as a very mixed and difficult situation. If the United States government declares a coup, you immediately have to shut off all aid, including humanitarian aid, the Agency for International Development aid, the support that we were providing at that time for a lot of very poor people. And that triggers a legal necessity. There's no way to get around it.

So, our assessment was, we will just make the situation worse by punishing the Honduran people if we declare a coup and we immediately have to stop all aid for the people, but we should slow off and try to stop anything that the government could take advantage of, without calling it a coup.

So, you're right. I worked very hard with leaders in the region and got Óscar Arias, the Nobel Prize winner, to take the lead on trying to broker a resolution without bloodshed. And that was very important to us, that, you know, Zelaya had friends and allies, not just in Honduras, but in some of the neighboring countries, like Nicaragua, and that we could have had a terrible civil war that would have been just terrifying in its loss of life. So I think we came out with a solution that did hold new elections, but it did not in any way address the structural, systemic problems in that society. And I share your concern that it's not just government actions; drug gangs, traffickers of all kinds are preying on the people of Honduras.

So I think we need to do more of a Colombian plan for Central America, because remember what was going on in Colombia when first my husband and then followed by President Bush had Plan Colombia, which was to try to use our leverage to rein in the government in their actions against the FARC and the guerrillas, but also to help the government stop the advance of the FARC and guerrillas, and now we're in the middle of peace talks. It didn't happen overnight; it took a number of years.

But I want to see a much more comprehensive approach toward Central America, because it's not just Honduras. The highest murder rate is in El Salvador, and we've got Guatemala with all the problems you know so well.

So, I think, in retrospect, we managed a very difficult situation, without bloodshed, without a civil war, that led to a new election. And I think that was better for the Honduran people. But we have a lot of work to do to try to help stabilize that and deal with corruption, deal with the violence and the gangs and so much else.

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# "She's Baldly Lying": Dana Frank Responds to Hillary Clinton's Defense of Her Role in Honduras Coup

APRIL 13, 2016, Democracy Now

[http://www.democracynow.org/2016/4/13/shes\\_baldly\\_lying\\_dana\\_frank\\_responds](http://www.democracynow.org/2016/4/13/shes_baldly_lying_dana_frank_responds)

AMY GOODMAN: For more on Honduras, we are joined by Dana Frank, is professor of history at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an expert on human rights and U.S. policy in Honduras.

Professor Frank, it's great to have you with us. Well, Hillary Clinton said a lot in this five-minute exchange with Juan González. Respond.

DANA FRANK: Well, I just want to say this is like breathtaking that she'd say these things. I think we're all kind of reeling that she would both defend the coup and defend her own role in supporting its stabilization in the aftermath. I mean, first of all, the fact that she says that they did it legally, that the Honduras judiciary and Congress did this legally, is like, oh, my god, just mind-boggling.

The fact that she then is going to say that it was not an unconstitutional coup is incredible, when she actually had a cable, that we have in the WikiLeaks, in which U.S. Ambassador to Honduras Hugo Llorens says it was very clearly an illegal and unconstitutional coup.

So she knows this from day one. She even admits in her own statement that it was the Honduran military, that she says, well, this was the only thing that was wrong there, that it was the military that took Zelaya out of the country, as opposed to somehow that it was an illegal thing we did—that the Honduran government did, deposing a president.

AMY GOODMAN: I want to turn to that WikiLeaks [cable](#) on Honduras. The U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, sent a cable to Washington on July 24, 2009, less than a month after the coup. The subject line was "Open and Shut: The Case of the Honduran Coup."

The cable asserted, quote, "there is no doubt" that the events of June 28, 2009, "constituted an illegal and unconstitutional coup," unquote. The Embassy listed arguments by supporters of the coup to claim its legality, and dismissed each of them, saying, quote, "none ... has any substantive validity under the Honduran constitution."

The Embassy went on to say the Honduran military had no legal authority to remove President Zelaya from office or from Honduras. The Embassy also characterized the Honduran military's actions as an "abduction" and kidnapping that was unconstitutional.

Again, this was the U.S. Embassy memo that was sent from Honduras to Washington. Professor Frank?

DANA FRANK: Well, I want to make sure that the listeners understand how chilling it is that the leading presidential—a leading presidential candidate in the United States would say this was not a coup.

The second thing is that she's baldly lying when she says we never called it a coup; we didn't, because that would mean we have to suspend the aid. Well, first of all, they repeatedly called it a coup. We can see State Department statements for months calling it a coup and confirming, yes, we call it a coup.

What she refused to do was to use the phrase "military coup." So, she split hairs, because Section 7008 of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for that year very clearly says that if it's a coup significantly involving the military, the U.S. has to immediately suspend all aid. So she—they decided to have this interpretation that it was a coup, but not a military coup.

So, she, Hillary Clinton—and Obama, for that matter, I want to make clear—in violation of U.S. law, that very clearly said if there's a coup, they have to cut the military aid and that—all other aid to the country, she violated the law, decided, well, it wasn't a military coup, when of course it was. It was the military that put him on the plane, which she says in her statement.

AMY GOODMAN: I mean, the memo is very clear.

DANA FRANK: Well, the Hugo Llorens cable is very clear. But look, even what she said on Saturday, she says, well, the military put him on the plane; that was the only problem here. She's admitting it was a military-led coup and that so, therefore, she's in violation of the law—so is Obama—by not immediately suspending the aid. And here she's saying, "Well, we never called it a coup." I mean, hello, we have so many public statements in which the State Department called it a coup.

AMY GOODMAN: In March 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton traveled to meet with the Honduran president, Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo, whose election was boycotted by opponents of the coup that overthrew Zelaya. Hillary Clinton urged Latin American countries at the time to normalize ties with the coup government.

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON: We think that Honduras has taken important and necessary steps that deserve the recognition and the normalization of relations. I have just sent a letter to the Congress of the United States notifying them that we will be restoring aid to Honduras. Other countries in the region say that, you know, they want to wait a while. I don't know what they're waiting for, but that's their right, to wait.

AMY GOODMAN: That was Hillary Clinton in 2010, Professor Frank.

DANA FRANK: I mean, what she did at the time was she played out the strategy—Obama and Clinton played out the strategy—that they would delay negotiations. They treated Micheletti, the post-coup dictator, as an equal partner to democratically elected President Zelaya, moved the negotiations into a sphere they could control and then delayed until the already scheduled elections in November.

The problem, as you say, is that this—that almost all the opposition had pulled out of that election. All international observers, like the Carter Center or the U.N., had pulled out, refusing to observe that election—the only observers were the U.S. Republican Party—and saying that this was not a legitimate election. And then, the very first—that day, even before the polls close, the U.S. recognizes the outcome of the election. And this is what we used to call a demonstration election: Let's just have any election and call this over and call that election—call that election legitimate.

AMY GOODMAN: Also in 2010, at the annual meeting of the Organization of American States, member nations remained divided over whether to allow Honduras back into the OAS. Honduras was expelled from the body the year before, after the military coup ousted Zelaya. This is Hillary Clinton then.

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON: Our ongoing discussions about Honduras makes clear the urgency of this agenda. As we emphasized, when the United States along with the rest of the hemisphere condemned the coup in Honduras, these interruptions of democracy should be completely relegated to the past. And it is a credit to this organization that they have become all but nonexistent in the Americas. Now it is time for the hemisphere, as a whole, to move forward and welcome Honduras back into the inter-American community.

AMY GOODMAN: In her memoir, *Hard Choices*, Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton wrote about the days following the 2009 coup in Honduras that ousted the democratically elected president, Mel Zelaya. She wrote, quote, "In the subsequent days I spoke with my counterparts around the hemisphere, including Secretary [Patricia] Espinosa in Mexico. We strategized on a plan to restore order in Honduras and ensure that free and fair elections could be held quickly and legitimately, which would render the question of Zelaya moot," unquote. That was from the hardcover version of Hillary Clinton's memoir. That section was later removed from the paperback version. The significance of this, Professor Frank?

DANA FRANK: Well, I mean, it's incredible this woman is a presidential candidate, that she's doing like things like this, the fact that she would say we wanted to "render the question of Zelaya moot," we wanted to bury the democratically elected president's existence and act like the coup didn't happen. I mean, that's why it's so terrifying that today—or rather, on Saturday, she would say—she would defend this coup, say it wasn't a coup, and defend her actions in installing this terrifically horrific, scary post-coup regime. And, of course, that she would cut that out of her memoir, in the paperback version, is also very scary.

AMY GOODMAN: Can you talk about the significance of Hillary Clinton's stance then? And let's remember, she was secretary of state serving the president—the president, of course, Barack Obama. What responsibility does the secretary of state have in this? And what did it mean for Honduras right up through today?

DANA FRANK: Well, Obama handed Latin America over to her and allowed her to carry forward this policy. I mean, it was certainly—Obama made some noises the very first day or two, and then, after that, was largely silent and handed over to Secretary of State Clinton. Clearly, he was her boss. If he didn't approve of this, it wouldn't have happened. And so, I think it's really important when we talk about Hillary Clinton, the candidate, what she's doing, to also talk about Obama's responsibility for that and Obama's responsibility for what's happened since, because I think, as a lot of people know, that coup and the illegitimate election that followed it, that Hillary Clinton is celebrating so clearly in her statements, opened the door to this complete—almost complete destruction of the rule of law in Honduras.

People hear about, oh, the gangs and violence and drug traffickers are taking over. Well, that's because the post-coup governments, both of Micheletti, Lobo and now Juan Orlando Hernández, have completely destroyed the rule of law, because they're in cahoots with these various forms of organized crime and drug traffickers and violence against the Honduran people.

So, this whole post-coup regime has also led to this tremendous corruption of the judiciary and the police and the military, for that matter. So, that's just—what's happened to Honduras, it's not just like there are randomly violent people down there.

This is a U.S.-supported regime. The aftermath of the coup, if you look at all these statistics—yes, there was no—it's not like there was a golden age before the coup, but this tremendous destruction of the basic rule of law in Honduras.

AMY GOODMAN: So, I want to go to what happened most recently in Honduras. Last month, gunmen assassinated Berta Cáceres, a well-known Honduran dissident, winner of the prestigious 2015 Goldman Environment Prize. They assassinated her in her home. In 2014, Berta Cáceres spoke about Hillary Clinton's role in the 2009 coup with the Argentine TV program Resumen Latinoamericano.

BERTA CÁCERES: [translated] We're coming out of a coup that we can't put behind us. We can't reverse it. It just kept going. And after, there was the issue of the elections. The same Hillary Clinton, in her book, *Hard Choices*, practically said what was going to happen in Honduras. This demonstrates the meddling of North Americans in our country. The return of the president, Mel Zelaya, became a secondary issue. There were going to be elections in Honduras. And here, she, Clinton, recognized that they didn't permit Mel Zelaya's return to the presidency. There were going to be elections. And the international community—officials, the government, the grand majority—accepted this, even though we warned this was going to be very dangerous and that

it would permit a barbarity, not only in Honduras but in the rest of the continent. And we've been witnesses to this.

AMY GOODMAN: That was Honduran environmentalist, indigenous activist Berta Cáceres speaking in 2014, murdered last month in her home in La Esperanza, Honduras. Talk about what Berta Cáceres said and the significance of her assassination, this horror that took place in Honduras, what she—why she was so prominent and top of the target list in Honduras.

DANA FRANK: Well, Berta Cáceres was this amazing, inspiring indigenous leader and environmental activist. And also—

AMY GOODMAN: Did you know her?

DANA FRANK: Yes, I did. I didn't know her very well personally. I had spent time with her in San Francisco and Oakland when she got the Goldman Prize last year. I remember first meeting her when she had gotten a phone call about the botched autopsy of the people that were killed by the DEA in Honduras. And, of course, her—we don't even know the results of her own autopsy today, so the ironies of that are really chilling.

I mean, she was so inspiring and so beautiful. If people google Berta Cáceres, you'll see in every picture she's glowing. You can just feel her presence. And it's of course, this tremendous heartbreak for all of us.

And I want to make sure people understand that this is the—this is the biggest assassination since the coup. There have been hundreds of people that have been assassinated, both by state security forces and by private actors and death squads, but they never touched the top leadership of the opposition.

And Berta wasn't just an indigenous environmental leader, she was a top leader of the opposition. In fact, when the resistance came to—came to the Lenca territories, she gave this beautiful speech welcoming everybody, that was one of the most beautiful speeches I've ever heard. And so, what's going on now is the fact—and she was so internationally renowned.

Speaker of the House—excuse me, ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi gave a whole reception in her honor last year. And we did—everybody did everything they could to protect Berta, and she was still assassinated. And this is a clear message by the Honduran elite, by the Honduran government, by the Honduran right, that they'll kill anybody now. And that's—I want people to understand how terrifying that is, that everybody in Honduras now feels they can be killed, no matter how famous they are.

AMY GOODMAN: Well, on Sunday, Bill Clinton, the former president, spoke at the New York Hall of Science in Corona, Queens. He was interrupted by protesters who were shouting in Spanish, "Hillary Clinton, you have Berta's blood on your hands!"



PROTESTER 1: Hillary Clinton supports mass deportation! Hillary Clinton supports mass deportation! Remember Berta Cáceres! Remember Berta Cáceres!

PROTESTER 2: Today we went to protest an event that was appealing to Latino communities to support Hillary Clinton at the Hall of Science in Corona, Queens. And we had a banner that said, "Hillary has blood on her hands." And we were removed by the police immediately.

AMY GOODMAN: Protesters chanting, "Hillary, we don't forgive. Hillary, we don't forget," when Bill Clinton spoke at the New York Hall of Science in Queens this weekend. Professor Frank?

DANA FRANK: Well, I mean, it's so beautiful just to see the protests and to understand that there's a tremendous critique of U.S. policy on Honduras, that's been going on since the day of the coup, that doesn't get covered at all in the press.

AMY GOODMAN: Why did the U.S. support the coup?

DANA FRANK: Ah, there's a big question. I mean, I think it's—I think it's really about the U.S. pushback against the democratically elected governments of the left and the center-left that came to power in Latin America in the '90s and in the 2000s—Venezuela, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, El Salvador, all these countries.

And Zelaya was the weakest link in that chain. He, himself, did not come out of a big social movement base at the time of his election, certainly since the coup. And I think they were—the U.S. was looking for a way to push back against that.

There's a very important military base, U.S. military base, Soto Cano Air Force Base, in Honduras. And Honduras has always been the most captive nation of the United States in Latin America. So, I think they were testing what they could get away with. And they got away with it. It was the first domino pushing back against democracy in Latin America and reasserting U.S. power, in service to a transnational corporate agenda.

AMY GOODMAN: Your final comment, Professor Frank, in this 2016 presidential election year and in looking at U.S. policy towards Latin America and Honduras?

DANA FRANK: Well, we certainly need to hold Hillary Clinton responsible and to say how terrifying and chilling it is that she would defend a military coup. Like, who is it that we're talking about here?

And the second thing is to also see that this isn't just about Hillary Clinton. It's about Obama, it's about Vice President Biden, who's in charge of Latin America policy now, and it's about Secretary of State John Kerry. They are very clearly celebrating and supporting and giving increased funding to the current government of Juan Orlando Hernández, that is continuing this war against the Honduran people. I mean, he's a dictator. He has overthrown parts of the Supreme Court and illegally named a new Supreme Court that's full of allegedly corrupt figures.

He has—he backed the coup. He illegally named a new attorney—led the illegal naming of a new attorney general. And he has admitted to stealing—we don't know the exact amount—into the tens of millions of dollars from the national health service and siphoning off into his own campaign. I mean, this is a criminal that the United States is supporting in office.

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## Pressure Needed in U.S. and Canada

Here, a Letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry; and a Letter to Canadian Government Officials: <http://us9.campaign-archive1.com/?u=ea011209a243050dfb66dff59&id=29af29c555>

Please re-send the article above and these letters to your elected politicians, pressuring them to publicly support the key demands:

- The establishment of the independent international judicial commission to directly join the criminal investigation into the assassination of Berta Caceres and attempted assassination of Gustavo Castro;
- The establishment of Congressional, Senate and Parliamentary inquiries into the role that the U.S. and Canada played in supporting the 2009 military coup and legitimizing and doing business with the post-coup regimes since then.

## Funds Needed for Family of Berta Caceres and COPINH

Since the assassination of Berta Caceres on March 3, 2016, Rights Action has channeled over \$23,000 to her family and to COPINH, that are at the forefront of efforts to ensure that justice is done, even as family and COPINH members are receiving threats, even as the corrupted regime is trying to 'criminalize' members of COPINH for the killing of Berta.

Tax Deductible Donations in the U.S. or Canada: Make checks to "Rights Action" (write Berta/COPINH on memo line) and mail to:

- U.S.: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

Credit-Card Donations:

- Canada: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/rights-action/>
- U.S.: <http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations> (click on NetworkForGood)

## Articles

- Berta Caceres' Acceptance Speech, 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize. To view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AR1kwx8b0ms>
- Murdered for Activism in Honduras, by Silvio Carrillo (Berta's nephew), March 11, 2016, New York Times:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/12/opinion/international/murdered-for-activism-in-honduras.html?emc=edit\\_tnt\\_20160311&nlid=45556342&tntemail0=y](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/12/opinion/international/murdered-for-activism-in-honduras.html?emc=edit_tnt_20160311&nlid=45556342&tntemail0=y)

- Berta Caceres: Who She Is & What She Lived For, by Grahame Russell, March 3, 2016: <http://us9.campaign-archive2.com/?u=ea011209a243050dfb66dff59&id=026d1728a3>
- Fight With Joy: Remembering Bertha Cáceres, by Sandra Cuffe, March 7, 2016: <https://intercontinentalcry.org/fight-joy-remembering-bertha-caceres/>
- Eulogy For Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores, by Bev Bell, March 9, 2016: <http://otherworldsarepossible.org/bertha-lives-life-and-legacy-bertha-caceres>
- Blood Flows Where Canadian Capital Goes, by Tyler Shipley, 03/6/2016: <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/blood-flows-where-canadian-capital-goes-371189471.html>
- Berta Cáceres, the Murdered Honduran Activist, Did Not Die. She Multiplied, by Karen Spring, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/karen-spring/bertha-caceres-murder\\_b\\_9500088.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/karen-spring/bertha-caceres-murder_b_9500088.html)
- Death Squads Are Back In Honduras, Activists Tell Congress, by Alex Emmons, <https://theintercept.com/2016/04/12/death-squads-are-back-in-honduras-honduran-activists-tell-congress/>

## More Information

- [www.BertaCaceres.org](http://www.BertaCaceres.org) (established by Berta's family)
- Honduras Solidarity Network: <http://www.hondurassolidarity.org/>
- Other Worlds: <http://otherworldsarepossible.org/>
- Common Frontiers: <http://www.commonfrontiers.ca/>
- School of the Americas Watch: <http://www.soaw.org/about-the-soawhinsec/what-is-the-soawhinsec>
- Witness For Peace: <http://www.witnessforpeace.org/>

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*"Berta Caceres did not die, she multiplied."* Thank-you for your multiplying commitment and activism. Please share this information far'n'wide.

Grahame Russell  
011 [504] 9848-4633 (in Honduras)  
[grahame@rightsaction.org](mailto:grahame@rightsaction.org)

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