

## **In Honduras, celebrating Canada Day 150, U.S.A. Fourth of July: Attack against daughter of Berta Caceres**

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Tegucigalpa.- This Friday at 2:36 pm, Bertita Zúniga Caceres, daughter of the slain indigenous and environmentalist leader Berta Cáceres, and two of her colleagues from COPINH (Civic Council of Honduran Popular and Indigenous Organizations), were attacked on two occasions by four men in Honduras.



(Mama Berta, Berta Caceres, Bertita Zuniga Caceres)

A statement from COPINH said that Bertita and her companions, Sotero Chavarría and Asunción Martínez, were attacked twice by four men when they were returning to the community of Cancire, in the municipality of Santiago Puringla, La Paz. In the first incident, three men armed with machetes stood next to a black Toyota Tacoma car with PCH 1886 plates and blocked the road that leads from the community of Cancire to San Antonio, the men threatened the members of Copinh with machetes.

"Thanks to the ability of the driver, the men with machetes could not stop or block the car, however, the fourth man, driver of the Toyota Tacoma threw a stone that hit the top of the driver side window of the car members of Copinh, were driving" the text said.

On the second occasion, the same car, with only the driver, persecuted members of Copinh along the same road dangerously with the clear intention of forcing them off the narrow mountainside road.

Later the Tacoma vehicle blocked the car that the defenders of the environment were riding in, trying to stop it for at least ten minutes. Fortunately the driver of the Copinh was able to take a detour and avoided further incidents.

"COPINH reports that this incident has to do with the ambitions of a few members of the communities of Lomas de San Antonio and Las Delicias, with the support of the U.S. government agency USAID, to cut access to water for the communities of San Antonio, Cancire, Higuito and Cedrito," the statement said. "These communities have been negatively affected by the Zazagua Hidroelectric dam, which has left its water sources dry".

COPINH requires the authorities investigate and punish these aggressions. It is the responsibility of the State of Honduras to protect the physical integrity of its members and take all necessary measures to ensure that the organization carries out its work in defense of the rights of the Lencas communities and their territories, the statement said.

Finally, the Indigenous organization calls on the international community to be vigilant and to demand from the Honduran authorities the protection of its members.

Berta Zúniga Cáceres, is one of four children of Berta Cáceres, who was murdered the morning of March 3, 2016, in her house in the city of La Esperanza, in the department of Intibucá. Her relatives and human rights defenders point out that this crime is linked to the Agua Zarca hydroelectric project, built on the Gualcarque river, by the company Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA).

So far, Honduran justice has captured eight alleged 'material authors' of the crime, two of them with direct links to the company DESA. There have been no arrests of the people – intellectual authors' – who planned and paid for the assassination of Berta.

Story on attack: <http://criterio.hn/2017/06/30/alerta-atentan-bertha-zuniga-hija-bertha-caceres/>

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### **Why So Many Hondurans and Guatemalans Flee North, Decade After Decade**

The exploitation and poverty, repression, corruption and impunity of Honduras and Guatemala are "American" and "Canadian" issues. The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, and North American companies and investors (including pension funds), and the U.S. military maintain profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran regimes, turning a blind eye and/or directly contributing to environmental harms, exploitation, repression, corruption and impunity that force so many to flee their homes and country, decade after decade.

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**In the U.S.: Demand that your Member of Congress co-sponsor The Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act (H.R. 1299)**

<https://bertavivecopinhsigue.copinh.org/article/the-berta-caceres-human-rights-in-honduras-act-hr-/>

- Here, an update of a video of Bertita Zuniga Caceres calling for the passing of this bill:  
<https://vimeo.com/206184044>
- Here, a Josh Fox video in support of the bill:  
<https://twitter.com/joshfoxfilm/status/881002762825322496>
- #JusticeforBerta #HR1299 #BertaCaceresAct

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#### **More information**

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#### **Tax Deductible Donations in the U.S. and Canada**

Since 1998, Rights Action has been funding the community development, indigenous rights and environmental defense work of COPINH. Make checks to "Rights Action" and mail to:

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