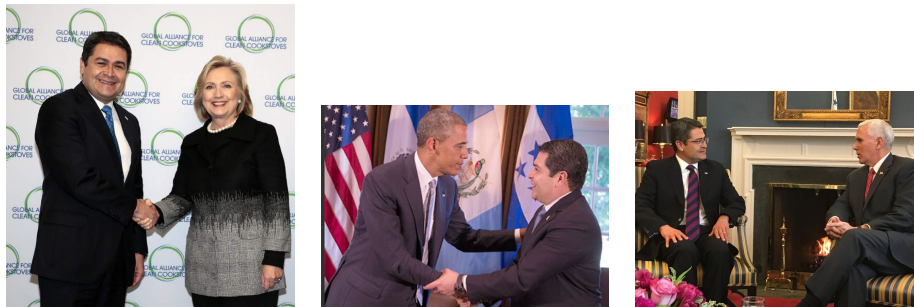


“Honduras is a narco-state” & the forced migrancy crisis

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/honduras-is-a-narco-state>

- Below: **“Testimony Brings Honduras President Closer to Brother’s Drug Trade Ties”** (by Parker Asmann, InSight Crime, May 15, 2019)

When will the U.S. and Canada, the European Union, World Bank and numerous global companies and investors, stop aiding and abetting the Honduran narco-state that was born after the 2009 U.S. and Canadian-backed military coup?



Honduran narco-state President Juan Orlando Hernandez, brother of detained drug cartel leader Juan Antonio “Tony” Hernández, with: former U.S. Secretary of State Clinton, former U.S. President Obama (after the 2009 coup), U.S. Vice-President Pence.

While drug trafficking occurred in Honduras before the 2009 coup, drug-trafficking crime rings became part of the government, state and military/police forces after the 2009 U.S. and Canadian-backed coup. It has worsened since then.

Narco-state/forced migrancy crisis

Tens of thousands of Hondurans are fleeing into exile, year after year, due to the repression and violence, corruption and destitution of Honduras’ narco-governments.

Berta Caceres (co-founder of COPINH and widely respected indigenous rights, land and environmental defender) was assassinated on March 2, 2016, by a hit-squad paid for by individuals with strong links to the Honduran narco-state. Edwin Espinal (partner of Canadian human rights activist Karen Spring) remains illegally jailed as a political prisoner because he was protesting the repression and violence, corruption and destitution of Honduras’ narco-governments.

The narco-government led by President Juan Orlando Hernandez is a “democratic ally” of the U.S. and Canada in the ad hoc ‘Lima Group’ that is part of U.S. and Canadian-led efforts to illegally overthrow the government of Venezuela.

There is no end in sight to this narco-state / forced migrancy crisis that is enabled and empowered by the U.S., Canada and the “international community”.

Testimony Brings Honduras President Closer to Brother's Drug Trade Ties

by Parker Asmann, May 15, 2019, <https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/testimony-brings-honduras-president-closer-brother-drug-trade-ties/>



Former Honduran congressman Juan Antonio "Tony" Hernández

Newly unveiled testimony from the brother of Honduras President Juan Orlando Hernández about his links to the drug trade is making it harder for the Central American head of state to deny his knowledge of such criminal activity, but it remains to be seen if this will have any real impact.

In [recently unsealed testimony](#) given to a US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent in November 2018, former Honduran congressman Juan Antonio "Tony" Hernández admitted to knowing and interacting with several notorious drug traffickers and being offered bribes by such individuals.

In one case, a member of [the Valles](#), formerly one of Honduras' most successful criminal groups, offered Tony Hernández weapons, horses, helicopters and large sums of money in an effort to have members of the gang appointed to Honduras' National Congress in order to help prevent the extradition of other members to the United States, among other things.

"I spoke to [an associate of the Valles] by telephone only once ... he offered me helicopters ... what he wanted was to have people in Congress to be able to ... to be able to handle, obviously, the issue of the extraditions," Tony Hernández told the DEA agent.

Tony Hernández appears to have maintained relationships with a veritable who's who of Central American drug traffickers. These included leaders from the [Cachiros](#) and Valles criminal groups, as well as Víctor Hugo Díaz Morales, alias "El Rojo," a powerful underworld figure who was [arrested in Guatemala City](#) in March 2017.

Hernández was further linked to Mario José Cálix Hernández, the former mayor of Gracias who authorities [recently accused](#) of transporting cocaine into the United States and who Tony Hernández named as El Rojo's "right-hand man."

US [authorities arrested](#) Tony Hernández in November 2018 on drug and weapons charges. They allege the former congressman was a "large-scale drug trafficker" who helped some of the region's most powerful traffickers move multi-ton shipments of cocaine — some of which had the initials "TH" stamped on them — into the United States for more than a decade.

Authorities allege that the president's brother helped process, receive, transport and distribute drugs — especially through the department of Olancho and the eastern region of La Moskitia, Honduras' main drug trafficking corridor — using connections with corrupt police officers and local National Party politicians.

Even before that, Tony Hernández was a “[person of interest](#)” in a US drug trafficking investigation involving former [Atlantic Cartel](#) leader Wilter Neptalí Blanco Ruíz in 2016.

Blanco was allegedly Tony Hernández's point man for controlling criminal economies ranging from drug to timber trafficking, in addition to overseeing certain narco-airstrips in Olancho, according to a former member of Honduras' inter-institutional security force (Fuerza Nacional de Seguridad Interinstitucional – FUSINA), who spoke to InSight Crime on the condition of anonymity.

InSight Crime Analysis

Tony Hernández's detailed knowledge of the activities of some of Honduras' most prominent drug traffickers makes it increasingly difficult for President Juan Orlando Hernández to deny being aware of these acts.

But whether anything comes of the recent revelations remains to be seen. These latest reports come amid deepening uncertainty regarding Honduras' anti-corruption drive.

The head of the internationally-backed Support Mission Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (Misión de Apoyo contra la Corrupción y la Impunidad en Honduras – MACCIH), Luiz Antonio Guimaraes Marrey, recently announced that he will be [stepping down in June](#). This comes just one year after he took the position following the [unexpected resignation](#) of his predecessor, Juan Jiménez Mayor, due to what he called a lack of support from the Organization of American States (OAS), the body's parent institution.

The Hernández administration has been focused on the country's violent street gangs, instead [of addressing](#) the rampant corruption that has [swirled around](#) the country's elites.

Without a director and with its mandate set to expire at the end of this year, the future of the MACCIH remains unclear.

To further complicate matters, President Hernández is one of the biggest regional allies of the United States in Latin America. Just last year, high-ranking US officials [met with](#) him to reinforce the two nations' “[strong partnership](#)” and their so-called commitment to the fight against corruption.

However, the “mounting evidence of widespread corruption and criminality of the Hernández administration is becoming more difficult to ignore,” according to Christine Wade, a Central America expert and political science professor at Washington College.

“[The United States'] top regional 'ally' is a veritable narco-state,” Wade added. “At a minimum, this should provide the US Congress with an opportunity to reevaluate aid and assistance to Honduras, but one would certainly hope that [the US State Department] will reassess this relationship.”

Why an estimated 250,000 Hondurans & Guatemalans are fleeing, this year alone!

The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and global businesses and investors (privatized hydro-electric dams, mining extraction, African palm, sugar cane and fruit production, garment "sweatshop" factors, etc.) maintain profitable relations with deeply corrupted and repressive governments in Honduras and Guatemala, turning a blind eye to and benefitting from repression, environmental devastation, exploitation and human rights violations, and corruption and impunity.

"U.S. & Canadian problems"

Keep sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to families, friends and networks, to politicians and media, to pension and investment funds, asking: Why our governments, companies and investment firms benefit from and turn a blind eye to poverty, repression and violence, environmental and health harms that are directly causing the forced migrancy/refugee crisis in Guatemala and Honduras.

Rights Action (U.S. & Canada)

Since 1995, Rights Action has been directly funding community-based human rights, environment and territory defenders in Guatemala and Honduras. We provide relief funds to victims of repression and human rights violations, health harms and natural disasters. We work to hold accountable the U.S. and Canadian governments, companies and investors, international actors (World Bank, etc.) that cause, contribute to and profit from repression and human rights violations, environmental harms and forced evictions, corruption and impunity.

Follow work of other solidarity/ NGO groups in U.S. and Canada

Honduras Solidarity Network: www.hondurassolidarity.org; Witness for Peace: www.witnessforpeace.org; School of Americas Watch: www.soaw.org; Common Frontiers Canada: www.commonfrontiers.ca; Breaking the Silence: www.breakingthesilenceblog.com; NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with People of Guatemala): www.nisgua.org; Mining Watch: www.miningwatch.ca; CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with People of El Salvador): www.cispes.org; Alliance for Global Justice: www.afgj.org; CODEPINK: www.codepink.org; GHRC (Guatemalan Human Rights Commission): www.ghrc-usa.org; Mining Injustice Solidarity Network: <https://mininginjustice.org>; Mining Justice Alliance: <https://miningjusticealliance.wordpress.com>

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