

Cousin of drug-trafficking President of Honduras arrested in the U.S.

"Mauricio Hernández Pineda is a former high-ranking Honduran police accused of protecting cocaine shipments along with Juan Antonio 'Tony' Hernandez, the brother of President Juan Orlando Hernández. He was arrested in New York on Wednesday."

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/cousin-of-drug-trafficking-president-of-honduras-arrested-in-the-us>

10 years after a military coup (June 28, 2009) ousted Honduras' last democratically elected government, the U.S., Canada, World Bank, IMF and global corporations maintain full economic, political and military relations with the military-backed, corrupt regime in power.

Every year, 10s of 1000s of Hondurans flee the country on foot, into exile.



Congresswoman Olivia Zuniga Caceres, daughter of Berta Caceres (assassinated by the Honduran regime, March 3, 2016):
"Drug-traffickers should be in jail, not in the Presidential Palace."

*** / ***

Key witness arrested in drug case against brother of the Honduran president

Mauricio Hernández Pineda is a former high-ranking Honduran police officer accused of protecting cocaine shipments along with Juan Antonio 'Tony' Hernandez, the brother of President Juan Orlando Hernández. He was arrested in New York on Wednesday.

By [DAVID C ADAMS](#) y [JEFF ERNST](#), 14 FEB 2020

<https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/key-witness-arrested-in-drug-case-against-brother-of-the-honduran-president>

A former senior Honduran police officer was arrested on Wednesday in New York, accused of conspiracy to traffic cocaine along with Tony Hernández, the brother of the president of Honduras, according to court documents.

His arrest comes days before Tony Hernandez is due to be sentenced in New York on February 24, after he was convicted by a New York jury in October. He faces a minimum sentence of 30 years in prison and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Mauricio Hernández was identified in that trial as a cousin of Tony Hernández, though the office of President Juan Orlando Hernández denied any family ties on Wednesday night.

President Hernández was named as an unaccused co-conspirator in the case against his brother and has strongly refuted the accusations.

It remains unclear if Mauricio Hernández turned himself in or if he was arrested and extradited. One official source familiar with the arrest told Univision that the former policeman surrendered voluntarily to the DEA. If he decides to cooperate with U.S. officials he could have traded what he knows with prosecutors in return for a lesser sentence. During the Tony Hernández trial, New York prosecutors repeatedly accused President Hernández and his government of receiving money from drug traffickers, and Mauricio Hernández would be a potentially valuable witness if he is ever prosecuted.

The president enjoys immunity in the United States because of his status as foreign head of state. He is a strong ally of the Trump administration's harsh immigration policies to limit the flow of Central American migrants on the southern border of the United States.

The president has argued that the case against his brother is a product of his efforts to combat violence and drug trafficking in Honduras, with the support of the United States. That included a 2012 agreement to extradite Honduran citizens to the United States.

Hernández Pineda, 47, allegedly provided protection for the drug trafficking activities of Juan Antonio 'Tony' Hernández including armed security for shipments of tons of cocaine through Honduras, [according to prosecutors in the Southern District of New York](#).

He "provided his co-conspirators with sensitive law enforcement information concerning planned operations so they could evade detection while transporting cocaine through Honduras," according to his indictment last year.

He is also charged with crimes related to the use and possession of machine guns and explosives.

Meetings with 'El Chapo'

Mauricio Hernández was allegedly one of Tony Hernández's key operators in northwestern Honduras, where traffickers sent tons of cocaine across the border to Guatemala on behalf of Joaquín 'El Chapo' Guzmán and the Sinaloa cartel in Mexico.

Mauricio Hernández was named at the trial as a participant in meetings with Guzmán in 2013 to discuss political contributions for the election campaign of president Hernández.

“Mauricio Hernandez Pineda betrayed his obligations as a police officer to uphold his country’s laws and prevent trafficking through his country, and instead facilitated the shipments of tons of cocaine that eventually made its way to the U.S.,” said Geoffrey Berman, the U.S Attorney for the Southern District of New York, in a statement after his indictment last year.

*** / ***

Why do 10s of thousands of Hondurans & Guatemalans flee home and country, year after year?

The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and global businesses and investors (hydro-electric dams, mining, African palm, sugar cane and fruit production, garment “sweatshop” factors, tourism, etc.) maintain profitable relations with anti-democratic, corrupt, repressive governments in Honduras and Guatemala, participating in or benefitting from exploitation and repression, environmental harms and human rights violations, corruption and impunity.

- **“Shithole countries: U.S., Canada & international community helping produce forced migrancy from Honduras & Guatemala”**, by Grahame Russell, October 2019, <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/shithole-countries>

Rights Action (U.S. & Canada)

Since 1995, Rights Action funds human rights, environment and territory defense struggles and projects in Guatemala and Honduras; funds victims of repression and human rights violations, health harms and natural disasters; works to hold accountable the U.S. and Canadian governments, multi-national companies, investors and banks (World Bank, etc.) that help cause and profit from repression and human rights violations, environmental harms and forced evictions, corruption and impunity in Honduras and Guatemala.

Act – Stir up the pot – Chip away

Keep sending copies of Rights Action information (and that of other solidarity groups/ NGOs) to family, friends and your networks, to politicians and media – always asking ‘*Why do our governments, companies and investment firms benefit from and turn a blind eye to poverty, repression and violence, environmental and health harms that caused the forced migrancy / refugee crisis in Guatemala and Honduras?*’

- U.S. Senate: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>
- U.S. House: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- Canadian Parliament: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>

Other solidarity/ NGO groups in U.S. and Canada

- Honduras Solidarity Network: www.hondurassolidarity.org;
- Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective: www.solidaritycollective.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 Canada: 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>;

Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & U.S.)

To support land, human rights and environmental defender groups in Honduras and Guatemala, make check to "Rights Action" 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: <http://rightsaction.org/donate/>

Donations of securities in Canada and the U.S.? Write to: info@rightsaction.org

Please share this information widely

Subscribe to Email Newsblasts: www.rightsaction.org

FB: www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org

TW: @RightsAction

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/rightsaction/>

YT: <https://www.youtube.com/user/rightsaction>