

June 2, 2005

HONDURAS: (More) REPRESSION AGAINST SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEADERS

Rights Action distributes this Urgent Action concerning two recent cases of repression against social movement leaders in Honduras: a shooting against Gregoria Flores, General Coordinator of OFRANEH (Fraternal Black Organization of Honduras); and, the targeted murder of Edickson Lemus, regional General Secretary of CNTC (National Organization of Rural Workers). These incidents are only two among the endemic climate of repression and criminalization of social movements in Honduras and the region.

Please re-distribute far and wide. To get on-off this elist: info@rightsaction.org.

WHAT TO DO: see below (Emergency-humanitarian funds are needed!).

URGENT ACTION, June 1, 2005
(prepared by Rights Action)

HONDURAS: (MORE) REPRESSION AGAINST SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEADERS

1- Attack on Gregoria Flores, OFRANEH

On May 30, 2005, Gregoria Flores, General Coordinator of OFRANEH (Organizaci n Fraternal Negra de Honduras) and an important leader of the Garifuna people, was shot in the arm in the city of La Ceiba, on the north coast of Honduras. She was on her way in a vehicle to the community of Triunfo de la Cruz to collect testimonies of human rights violations to present to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, when an unknown individual began shooting at the vehicle, wounding Gregoria Flores in the arm. The incident occurred along the Avenue Isidro, the central avenue in the city of La Ceiba.

OFRANEH has been actively accompanying Garifuna communities, working to defend communal territory from the advances of mega-tourist projects,

large landowners, and other initiatives such as PATH, the Honduras Land Administration Project, financed by the World Bank. (Rights Action recently distributed an article by Gregoria Flores about this serious situation that is threatening the community existence of the Garifuna people)

Only this past March 25, 2005, State authorities illegally entered and searched the house of OFRANEH activist Miriam Miranda, supposedly searching for weapons. The government has not clarified this act of persecution, one of several cases of political repression against Garifuna community leaders. (See Rights Action urgent action, recently distributed)

2- Targetted killing, Edickson Roberto Lemus

In the northwestern city of El Progreso, Yoro, another violent act of repression occurred on May 24, 2005. Edickson Roberto Lemus, a regional coordinator of one of the major campesino organizations in the country, the CNTC (Central Nacional de Trabajadores del Campo), left a meeting in the city and took a city bus. An unknown individual boarded the bus and shot Edickson Roberto Lemus 4 times, killing him immediately, at approximately 11:30am in the Bendeck neighbourhood.

Lemus had been on his way to the nearby community of El Pajuiles, where the campesino group 'Renacer' (Rebirth) had suffered a violent eviction on May 19, 2005. He had also been an important organizer in several communities, accompanying various campesino groups in the department of Yoro and coordinating solidarity and follow-up in other cases of repression against local community leaders.

These acts of repression and intimidation against important social movement leaders demonstrate patterns of the violent selective repression infamous in the 1970s and 1980s. Over the past 2 years, human rights organizations have been denouncing an increase (or continuation) of the 'National

Security
Doctrine'-style repression of previous years.

WHAT TO DO:

Send letters, phone calls and faxes of concern to the authorities below,
demanding:

- a thorough investigation into the shooting of Gregoria Flores
- a response from State authorities regarding the violent search of Miriam Miranda's house, March 25
- an impartial and exhaustive investigation into the murder of regional CNTC coordinator Edickson Roberto Lemus
- that the material and intellectual authors of these crimes be brought to justice
- an immediate halt to the criminalization of and repression against social movement and organization leaders and members in Honduras

CANADA:

- Robert Richard, Canadian Ambassador to Honduras, F:(504)239-7767, E:tgipa@dfait.maeci.gc.ca
- Honduran Embassy in Canada, Ana Carolina Galeano Burgos, 151 Slater St, #805-A, Ottawa, K1P-5H3, E: embhonca@embassyhonduras.ca, T: (613)233-8900, F:(613)232-0193

USA:

- Larry Palmer, US Ambassador to Honduras, t:(504) 236-9320 / 238-5114, F:(504) 236-9037
- Mario Miguel Canahuati, Honduran Ambassador to US, T:(202) 966-7702, 966-2604, 966-9751, F:(202) 966-9751, E: embassy@hondurasemb.org , 3007 Tilden Street N.W., Suite 4-M, Washington, D.C. 20008

HONDURAS:

- Honduras mission to the United Nations, T: 212-752-3370, E: hndun.org
- Lic. Ricardo Maduro, President of the Republic, Fax: (504) 221-4552
- Dr. Ramon Custodio Lopez, National Human Rights Commissioner, F: (504) 232-6894, Email: custodiolopez@conadeh.hn

with copies to OFRANEH: ofraneh@laceiba.com and/or CNTC:
cntc@sdnhon.org.hn

To contribute tax-deductible funds for emergency-humanitarian relief
and
community development and environmental work of OFRANEH and other
grassroots
organizations, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- * United States: 1830 Connecticut Av, NW, Washington DC, 20009.
- * Canada: 509 St. Clair Ave W, box73527, Toronto ON, M6C-1C0.

On-line donations: USA and Canada: www.rightsaction.org. Wire funds
to
Rights Action: contact info@rightsaction.org, 416-654-2074.