

HONDURAS – Repression Against Indigenous-Garifuna people

THE IDB (INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK) IS FUNDING A MEGA-TOURISM PROJECT IN THE TELA BAY, HONDURAS RESULTING IN THE WHOLESALE VIOLATION OF INDIGENOUS GARIFUNA RIGHTS

Rights Action has just returned from leading an educational delegation to Honduras' north shore, inhabited principally by Indigenous-Garifuna people since 1798. Since 1998, Rights Action has supported and worked with OFRANEH (Fraternal Black Organization of Honduras), a Garifuna community development, rights and environmental organization in 46 Garifuna communities along Honduras' north shore.

Many Garifuna communities are suffering repression and threats, as wealthy tourism industry interests, including principally the IDB (Inter-American Development Bank), are steamrolling ahead with the "Micos Golf and Beach Resort" project on Garifuna territory, and also in the "Jeannette Kawas National Ecological Reserve". Phase one of this Micos "development" project includes: 400 vilas; 18 hole golf course, two 5-star hotels, pools, tennis courts, bars, shopping center, etc.

Below, an urgent action from Amnesty International concerning recent cases of repression and threats against Garifuna community leaders.

WHAT TO DO: see below.

To get on/off Rights Action's email list, see the end of this message.

* * *

HONDURAS: FEAR FOR SAFETY / DEATH THREATS
Amnesty International PUBLIC AI Index: AMR 37/001/08
17 June 2008

Santos Feliciano Aguilar Álvares was abducted, beaten and threatened with death on 5 June by up to 10 men, allegedly private security guards working for a local real estate company in San Juan. Santos Feliciano Aguilar Álvares is a member of the Afro-descendant Garifuna community of San Juan, Atlántida department, northern Honduras. A few hours before the incident, he had taken part in a community assembly attended by representatives of the local real estate company who he accused of pressurizing Garifuna people to sell their land.

At around 9.30pm, on 5 June, the unknown men surrounded Santos Feliciano Aguilar Álvares as he walked down a street in the outskirts of the San Juan village whilst on his way to carry out an errand. The group of men abducted Santos Aguilar and took him to premises owned by the real estate company and beat him.

Whilst being held against his will, they accused Santos Aguilar of being "a spy for the leaders of Nuevo San Juan" (oreja de los directivos del Nuevo San Juan). The men intimidated Santos Aguilar by saying to each other "let's kill him and bury him right here" (matémoslo y enterrémoslo aquí mismo).

Santos Feliciano Aguilar Álvares was released shortly after the beating and the injuries he sustained required hospital treatment. Amnesty International believes that his safety and that of other members of the Garifuna community is at risk.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Indigenous groups in Honduras, including the Afro-descendant Garifuna communities, have struggled for more than a decade to assert their right to the land they have inhabited for generations. Their land is coveted by companies seeking to build tourist resorts that would displace the Garifuna people.

Members of the community have suffered threats and acts of intimidation linked to their struggle to protect their land rights.

In March and June 2006 Jessica García, one of the Garifuna leaders, was harassed and threatened at gun point to sign over land belonging to the community (UA 219/06, AMR 37/005/2006). In November 2005 an arson

attack destroyed the property of Wilfredo Guerrero, another of the Garífuna leaders. Three young members of the same community were killed in 2006. Police officers have been charged in connection with these killings.

* * *

WHAT TO DO:

Send your appeals to the offices below, in Spanish or English, demanding:

respect for the human and territorial rights of the Garífuna people;

a suspension of the "Micos Beach and Golf Resort" until all pending land, environmental and territorial issues have been worked out with the Garífuna communities, in a transparent and internationally monitored discussion and negotiation process;

SEND LETTERS TO:

Luis Alberto Moreno
President of the IDB
Inter-American Development Bank
1300 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20577, USA
T: 202-623-3100, Of # NE1204
E: yadirav@iadb.org

Steven Stone
IDB Director for projects in Honduras
T: [504] 232-4838
F: (504) 232-8953
E: COF/CHO@iadb.org

PRESIDENT OF HONDURAS
Manuel Zelaya
Casa Presidencial
Boulevard Juan Pablo Segundo
Palacio José Cecilio del Valle
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
F: [504] 235 7700

HONDURAN EMBASSY IN CANADA
151 Slater St. Suite 805
Ottawa, ON, K1P-5H3, CANADA
T: (613) 233-8900
F: (613) 232-0193
e: embhonca@embassyhonduras.ca
E: postmaster@embassyhonduras.ca

HONDURAN CONSULAR OFFICE IN MONTREAL
1650 Maisonnneuve West, Suite 306
Montreal, QC, H3H-2P3, CANADA
T: (514) 937-1138
F: (514) 937-2194
E: consulado.montreal@embassyhonduras.ca
E: cghonm@total.net

HONDURAS EMBASSY IN USA
3007 Tilden Street, NW, Suite 4M
Washington, DC 20008
t: (202) 966-7702
f: (202) 966-9751

COPIES TO

Organización Fraternal Negra Hondureña, OFRANEH
La Ceiba, Atlántida, Honduras
E: ofraneh@yahoo.com

* * *

WHAT TO DO

Based in Guatemala, Rights Action (with tax-deductible legal status in Canada and USA) funds and works with community-based Indigenous, development, environment and human rights organizations in Guatemala and Honduras, and also in El Salvador, Oaxaca and Chiapas; and educates about and is involved in activism related to global development, environmental and Indigenous and human rights struggles.

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS for indigenous and community-based organizations that are implementing their own development, human rights and environment projects --- including OFRANEH ---, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

* UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887;

* CANADA: 422 Parliament St, Box 82552, Toronto ON, M5A 4N8.

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: www.rightsaction.org.

HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATIONS TO MINING-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES: Consider forming your own group and coming on an educational seminar trip to learn more about community and Indigenous resistance to mining and other large-scale "development" projects.

2nd HEMISPHERIC GATHERING AGAINST MILITARIZATION – HONDURAS, OCTOBER 3-5: Form your own group and come to Honduras for this continental Gathering. ¡Para callar las armas, hablemos los pueblos! (To quiet weapons, the people must speak!). www.antimilitarizacion.blogspot.com; info@rightsaction.org. PLACE: La Esperanza, Intibucá, Honduras.

3rd SOCIAL FORUM OF THE AMERICAS – GUATEMALA, OCTOBER 7-12: Form your own group and come to Guatemala. Thousands of people from across the Americas are expected at this gathering to debate and discuss (and enjoy awesome music, art and theater) how Another World Is Possible ... And Necessary. For more info: info@rightsaction.org.

JOIN: Rights Action's our email list: <http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3>

RECEIVE OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: info@rightsaction.org

CREATE YOUR OWN E-MAIL LIST: and re-distribute this and other information.

LISTEN: to www.democracynow.org news program every day.

READ: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States";

SMILE: And live to make another world is possible, everyday.

--

If you do not want to receive any more newsletters, [this link](#)

To update your preferences and to unsubscribe visit [this link](#)

Forward a Message to Someone [this link](#)

