

ALERT #8 - Military Coup in Honduras, July 2, 2009

SUSPENSION OF ALL CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, BY ILLEGITIMATE MILITARY REGIME, by SOA Watch

- To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:
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- EMERGENCY FUNDS NEEDED: See below for how to donate and what funds are being used for
- CONTACT: Grahame Russell (Rights Action co-director), 1-860-751-4285, info@rightsaction.org; Annie Bird (Rights Action co-director), 919-412-2979, annie@rightsaction.org

SCHOOL OF AMERICAS WATCH Press Release

- For more info in Spanish, contact Bertha Oliva of COFADEH (Committee of Family Members of the Disappeared) at 011-504-8991-0259 (cell) or 011-501-222-7144
- For more info in English, contact Lisa Sullivan (in Venezuela) at 011-58-251-935-0182 or Hendrik Voss (media@soaw.org).

SUSPENSION OF ALL CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, BY ILLEGITIMATE MILITARY REGIME, ... and more info

On Wednesday morning, 1 July 2009, the Honduran Congress announced a suspension of citizens' rights in Honduras for 24 hours.

Citizens may not organize or otherwise congregate for any reason, and homes may be entered by government forces without permit. The curfew that has been in place since Sunday has been extended for 6 more days.

Supporters of the resistance maintain their commitment to publicly protest the coup and demand the return of President Zelaya and democratic rule.

There is a foreseen escalation in aggression from the government and army against the resistance movement.

Other sources from inside Honduras report that that campesinos and indigenous peoples from rural areas continue marching on foot towards the capital to join the protests in Tegucigalpa, in which tens of thousands of people are already participating.

The media continues to be controlled by supporters of the coup, maintaining that no coup has taken place in the country and that the president de facto, Roberto Micheletti, took power using legal means. They continue to refuse to report on the political repression and human rights abuses occurring in the country.

Bombs were placed on Tuesday night at the Supreme Court and at a private radio station that is supporting the coup government. These acts have been used by the coup government to justify today's suspension of constitutional rights.

Members of the resistance believe that the bombings were executed by the coup government or its allies in order to discredit the resistance. Some of the most powerful supporters of the coup in Honduras are the owners of private security companies, which is a big industry in Honduras. These private security forces have been used to bolster the size of pro-Micheletti rallies, if not for other political purposes as well.

People are concerned that with the suspension of constitutional rights, the coup government will forcefully enter the house of the Minister of the Presidency, Enrique Flores Lanza, one of the leaders of President Zelaya's cabinet. Flores Lanza is organizing a resistance government and it is believed that Micheletti's government wishes to confiscate documents stored in his house.

Other acts of repression were seen in the city of El Progreso on Tuesday, in which 12 people were arrested during the protests. Seven are still being held as of Wednesday afternoon and are being charged with treason against the state of Honduras.

International pressure led to a reduction in the number of youth detained in the Department of Olancho. However, there are reports that some detentions continue there.

De facto president Micheletti has stated that President Zelaya will be arrested on charges of treason and abuse of authority if he returns.

In the international sphere, the Organization of American States (OAS) has given the coup leaders 72 hours to reinstate Zelaya as president of Honduras.

Originally scheduled to return to Honduras on Thursday, Zelaya is now planning to travel to Honduras on Saturday, accompanied by Argentine President Cristina Fernández, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa, OAS

Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza, and United Nations General Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto, as well as other foreign observers.

The United States Southern Command has announced that it is suspending military operations in Honduras. Honduras houses several US military bases and has served as the United States' base of operations for military operations throughout Central America since the early 1980's.

However, the U.S. remains the only country in the region that has not recalled its ambassador.

Furthermore, the Honduran ambassador to the United States stated on 1 July 2009 that the 'removal' of President Zelaya was not a coup.

Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala have stopped trading with and fully closed their borders to Honduras for 48 hours. Venezuela has stopped all trade with Honduras. The United States has yet to take any action, although there is mounting pressure to do so within the region.

The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have also cut aid to Honduras.

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FUNDS ARE NEEDED FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN HONDURAS

Rights Action staff are in Honduras working with the pro-democracy and rule of law sectors. Funds are being sent to Honduras and used by community development and human rights organizations for: food and shelter, transportation and communication costs, urgent action outreach and human rights accompaniment work.

Make tax deductible donations to Rights Action and mail to:

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

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AMERICANS AND CANADIANS SHOULD CONTACT YOUR OWN MEDIA, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SENATORS & MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, TO DEMAND:

- unequivocal denunciations of the military coup

- no recognition of this military coup and the 'de facto' government of Roberto Michelletti
- a return of the constitutional government
- respect for safety and human rights of all Hondurans
- justice and reparations for the illegal actions and rights violations committed during this illegal coup