

Rights Action
SEPTEMBER 15, 2010

Efrain Lopez KILLED, MANY WOUNDED

BELOW:

- A series of reports from Honduras about the September 15th Pro-Democracy Marches & About the State Repression
- COFADEH's August human rights report
- Honduras Human Rights Accompaniment Project



(One of the 'abuelas' or grandmothers of the resistance movement (on the left), with Oscar, a child, holding a picture of one of the movement's martyrs, Wendy Elizabeth Avila, who was killed due to overexposure to tear gas fired at her, and other peaceful protesters, in September 2009. The man on the right wears a 'cuarta urna' or fourth ballot t-shirt showing

support for the convening of a National Constituent Assembly. In behind, a sign is held up – day 445 of resistance to the military coup regime, since the June 28, 2009 coup. Photo: Karen Spring, September 15, 2010)

The isolated, military-backed regime of Honduras (supported almost solely by the USA and Canada) continues to use repression as its daily response to the on-going and amazing people's pro-democracy movement.

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Thank-you ...

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RESISTANCE MARCH IN TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

(by Chuck Kaufman, Alliance for Global Justice, Sept. 15, 2010.
chuck@afgj.org)

Today, Sept. 15, Central America Independence Day, our US accompaniment delegation to Honduras marched with 50,000 supporters of the National Front for Popular Resistance (FNRP). The FNRP's 2 mile march was far larger than the official government four block march. The Resistance marchers filled much of the 2 mile stretch with marching bands, colorful banners, and militant chants.



(Police block road leading to the National Stadium (large blue structure) where the 'golpistas' or coup supporters carry out their independence day celebrations. Photo: Karen Spring)

Following the march the Resistance Front released the 1,270,000 signatures they have gathered over the past five months calling for a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution and to return democracy to this country which suffered a US-supported military coup on June 28, 2009, followed by a sham election in which Porfirio Lobo was selected in the hope of legitimizing the coup and returning Honduras to international bodies such as the UN and Organization of American States. There was no international election observation, but the coup government claimed that 1 million Hondurans voted, a claim widely challenged by the Resistance.

The FNRP made a decision to gather more signatures than the inflated government vote claim and our delegation had the privilege of witnessing the unveiling of the over 1.2 million names, which unlike, the names of those who allegedly voted in the sham election last year, will be posted to the internet for all to see.

Thus the people of Honduras continue to struggle to transform their country.

While there was no repression in Tegucigalpa, where our delegation accompanied the march, in San Pedro Sula, Honduras' second largest city, police attacked a concert after the march hospitalizing eight people and killing one. They severely beat the musicians and destroyed all of their instruments. In a few days our delegation heads for San Pedro Sula. The delegation was organized by the Marin Task Force on the Americas, Alliance for Global Justice, and Nonviolence international.

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VENDOR KILLED IN POLICE/MILITARY ATTACK TODAY

By Adrienne Pine

(http://www.resistenciahonduras.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1116:vendor-killed-in-policemilitary-attack-today&catid=103:human-rights&Itemid=352)

Tegucigalpa, Wednesday 15 September, 2010 -- Mr. Efraín López, dedicated to the sale of lottery tickets in the central park of San Pedro Sula and who was in the park at the moment when the police attacked the concert and rally of the National People's Resistance Front FNRP, died from teargas shot by the police. The president of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Honduras CODEH, Andrés Pavón, confirmed the death of López, in a San Pedro hospital.

According to CODEH, at the hospital they did not know what type of antidote to use when they received the patient in urgent condition, because the police does not make public the chemicals that they use in their teargas canisters. The now deceased man had been in the area at the moment of the attack, where he always sold National Lottery tickets, a product of the National Foundation for Childhood PANI.

CODEH informed that there are two people hurt with severe injuries who are in hospitals in the city. They also informed that 39 people who had been detained in the police station of the Suncery neighborhood were freed by a judge named by the Appeals Court of San Pedro Sula, following the presentation of a habeas corpus request. That they were

freed confirms the fact that their detention was illegal. (Translation by Quotha)

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SAN PEDRO SULA – AT LEAST ONE PERSON KILLED IN SAVAGE REPRESSION

(Summarized and translated from Los Necios and Resistencia, September 15, 2010, by La Voz de los de Abajo, Chicago. vickicervantes@yahoo.com)

A march of more than 50,000 was savagely attacked by police and military in San Pedro Sula leaving at least one person dead and others injured. The attack began as the march passed in front of the installations of Radio Uno, a radio station that has been subjected to repression since the coup of June 28, 2009.

The military and police broke windows and threw tear gas into the Radio's building while attacking the non-violent marchers, the street vendors, nearby business and people who just happened to be passing by the area.

The police used a water canon and massive amounts of tear gas while they brutally beat everyone they could. A number of high school drum and bugle corps were participating in the march and they were attacked and their instruments destroyed.

A concert organized as part of the Frente's activities had just begun in the park at the end of the march route was attacked, musicians and the public were beaten and gassed and instruments and equipment stolen or destroyed. Well known musicians - including Mario de Mezapa, Café Guancasco, Fredy Melgar - were present when the attack occurred.

Troops forced their way into Radio Uno's offices and pulled out Ernesto Bardales; they broke several limbs and some of his teeth in the beating. The police destroyed a statue of President Manuel Zelaya and burnt the flag of the FNRP. There were numerous injuries from the tear gas and beatings and a number of adults and minors were taken to the hospital; least one of the victims had died as of the reports received this evening.

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**COMMUNIQUE FROM THE MUSIC BAND “CAFÉ GUANCASCO”,
ABOUT REPRESSION THEY - & THOUSANDS MORE - SUFFERED IN
SAN PEDRO SULA**

(http://www.resistenciahonduras.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1107:official-communique-from-cafe-guancasco&catid=99:official&Itemid=348)

To the National People's Resistance Front, human rights organizations, the media, the international community and general population:

We write to inform that this September 15 we were brutally attacked by the police and army, while performing at the "What Independence?" concert along with thousands of people in the audience, among them young boys and girls, elderly men and women, and many others who were peacefully enjoying our performance.

A little less than 10 minutes after the concert had begun, the repressive agents directly attacked the stage where we were performing, shooting teargas canisters onto the stage and all around the area where the concert was being held. They then sprayed all the audio equipment and the instruments with gas and high-powered water, throwing them from the platform and stealing much of the equipment.

A member of our band was brutally beaten in the head and hands; this compañero is also a member of the Honduran band Montuca Sound System and had joined us for the tour that was to begin with this concert.

Other compañeros from Café Guancasco were seriously injured from the gas and required medical attention.

Café Guancasco is a musical group that is part of the National People's Resistance Front and on this occasion, together with many other local organizations, we had organized the concert as a gift to the whole Sula Valley.

The costs of the damaged equipment reach hundreds of thousands of dollars. The company affected is called Euro Sound and is currently

carrying out the estimate of the losses in order to charge Café Guancasco, which directly rented the equipment for the activity.

We address our message of protest to all the people of the world. We escaped with sick children in our arms, women who had been beaten, injured youths, elderly people who had fainted. In Honduras it is no longer legal to make art, it is no longer legal to publicly side with the people. We send our message of condemnation to the dictatorship of Porfirio Lobo Sosa. Our song is nothing more than a shout of hope for millions of people trying to free their nation, and if this bothers him, he will have to get used to living with the contempt of the people, which we will once again turn into song.

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COFADEH report for August 2010
August 2010 – Deadly Month for Human Rights in Honduras
(translated by: toml@quixote.org)

The Committee of Families of the Detained and Disappeared of Honduras, COFADEH, emphasizes that the month of August continues to be a period in which those who violate human rights choose to carry out particularly repressive actions –this August, 2010 is no exception. The calendar of human rights demonstrates that this period is deadly.

Why have they chosen the month of August? What is the logic? In the decade of the 1980s, this month was tragic and today, in the context of the coup d'état, the same occurs. For example, last year, heavy repression was carried out; assassinations of members of the resistance, persecution, imprisonment of dozens of people and the initiation of politically motivated judicial proceedings.

Family members of the detained and disappeared of the continent, organized in the Federation of Families of the Detained and Disappeared, FEDEFAM, conducted an analysis of the decade of the 1980s and observed that in all of our countries the forced disappearance of people was being carried out.

As a result, August 30 was established as the International Day of the Detained and Disappeared, thanks to the efforts and pressure brought by family members and the Congresses of several nations.

In the month of August, the repression and infiltration of marches, assemblies, the seizure of the installations of INPREMA, were some of the strategies to demobilize sectors which had decided to protest.

What follows is a partial list of the cases in which diverse forms of repression were used including: political assassinations, torture, persecution, death threats, harassment among others.

1- At the beginning of August, the National Autonomous University of Honduras, UNAH, was converted into a battlefield between students and repressive forces, who beat, gassed, tortured and captured students at the request of university authorities, information which was reconfirmed by Security Minister Oscar Alvarez.

2- Teachers were victims of repression; harassment, threats, aggressions, imprisonment and assassination. Teachers Andrés Martínez; Edgar Soriano; Luís Sosa and Carlos Anariva were captured and tortured, and the Public Prosecutor's Office opened a legal suit against them for exercising their right to peaceful protest. Teachers Nelson Milla Díaz, Néstor Alemán, and Juan Ramón Márquez were captured and taken to the Transit Police Station where their bodies, bloodied from the beatings, were cleaned up as were those of other teachers. Teachers Dagoberto Espinal, José María Andino and German de Jesús Maldonado, were captured and taken to Liberty Plaza, next to the Presidential Palace, where they were illegally detained for hours.

3- Repression against peasants in Puerto Grande, Zacate Grande; the Bajo Aguán; Unión, Copán; and Cofradía, Cortés, and all of the actions against them share the common denominator of the use of public forces to protect the interests of powerful landholders and to usurp land from its legitimate owners.

4- The repressive actions of the regime extended to journalists and media outlets that are not supportive of the coup:

A campaign of defamation and persecution has been directed against Swedish correspondent in Honduras, Dick Emanuelsson, who has been threatened with being taken to court due to his coverage of activities of the popular resistance.

For several days, Rene Rojas, in Santa Rosa de Copan in the western part of the country, has been the victim of repeated attacks ranging from death threats to detention by members of the National Preventative Police assigned to the zone, due to his denunciations of abuses committed by the police against citizens in the region.

Detention and threats against journalist Brayan Flores of El Libertador by COBRAS while carrying out journalistic work at the National Teachers Institute (INPREMA).

Journalist Eduardo Coto Barnica, of the Radio Uno collective of San Pedro Sula, was illegally and arbitrarily detained by police while carrying out his work as a social communicator during a violent displacement of people in Choloma, Cortez.

Journalists Richard Casulá of Canal 36 and Carlos Paz, of Radio Globo, were savagely beaten by police while covering the violent repression against teachers.

Journalist José Alemán of Ocotepeque is the object of harassment by a local Municipal Council official.

Radio Uno of San Pedro Sula has been sabotaged and was forced off the air. Transmission cables were cut so that the radio could not transmit. Day before the incident, unknown actors threatened to burn the transmitters.

5- Unknown actors threatened to kill Mr. Heliodoro Cáceres, member of the National Popular Resistance Front in Tela, Atlántida, for his efforts in search of his son Oslin Càceres Obando who was disappeared on June 13 minutes after informing his family that he was surrounded by police.

6- Murders:

Murder of Santos Remigio Ávila, member of the National Popular Resistance Front and General Secretary of the National Peasants Association of Honduras (ANACH) in Guaymaca, Francisco Morazán.

Murder of Víctor Manuel Mata; Sergio Magdiel Amaya; and youth, Rulbin Marel Villeda (14), on August 17, all members of the San Esteban Cooperative, Bajo Aguán.

Murder of journalist Israel Zelaya, who prior to being murdered had suffered threats for his opposition to the coup.

Murder by stabbing of leader in the teachers movement and active member of the FNRP, Luís Antonio Hernández, in Sinuapa, Ocotepeque.

We denounce the murder of Bessy Pamela Cerrato Banegas, in Yucarán, El Paraíso, who bore machete wounds and signs of torture. She is the daughter of Arminda Banegas, member of the Eighth Section of the Bottling Workers Union, STIBYS, and member of the FNRP. Six months have passed since this criminal act and the Public Prosecutor's Office has not prosecuted those responsible.

COFADEH demands that the national and international community take actions that will stop the persecution and political crimes against different sectors of Honduran society who are committed to the struggle for a National Constituent Assembly, through the National Popular Resistance Front.

FOR THE ACTS AND THE PERPETRATORS
WE WILL NOT FORGET, NOR FORGIVE

Committee of Families of the Detained and Disappeared of Honduras
[COFADEH]
September 3, 2010, Tegucigalpa

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HONDURAS ACCOMPANIMENT PROJECT

HISTORY: In the days immediately following the June 29, 2009 coup d'état in Honduras, Friendship Office Staff (formerly with the Quixote Center) traveled to Tegucigalpa at the request of Honduran social movement leaders to provide emergency accompaniment and help to assess needs. In the first weeks of the coup, we worked with partners in the Hemispheric Social Alliance to organize International Missions of

Accompaniment, Solidarity and Witness to provide a seamless international presence and set up a mechanism for daily communication with the National Coalition against the Coup (prior to establishment of the FRNP) to coordinate efforts and disseminate information in a context of human rights violations, repression and a total news blackout.

Then, during a two day gap in July with no International Mission in the country, a bomb exploded in the STIBYS union office used for meetings and a movement leader was violently murdered – 26 stab wounds, every finger broken. The National Coalition against the Coup called with an urgent request to establish a program for permanent accompaniment.

In response, we initiated the Honduras Accompaniment Project with a two person team permanently based in Honduras.

We sponsor US/Canadian Human Rights Accompaniment Delegations to increase the international presence and help to get information out. We place short term accompaniers to accompany specific individuals/organizations who request and require it and helped to facilitate emergency evacuations when requested.

PURPOSE: To accompany the Honduran people, especially the National Front of Popular Resistance in their historic, non-violent, struggle to transform their society by:

- providing international accompaniment for human rights defenders, communities and social movement leaders working for systemic change in an environment of repression, political persecution and personal risk in the interest of dissuading violence
- bearing witness to and supporting the documentation of events and human rights abuses
- providing consistent and accurate information to the international community
- communicating with international partners regarding emergency response needs on the ground in Honduras

CURRENT TEAM: Caitlin Power Hancey is currently based in Honduras with the Accompaniment Project. Caitlin has done accompaniment work in Guatemala and brings that experience to the Honduran context. Jenny Atlee is based in DC and has done accompaniment work for many years

in Central America. We are currently in conversation with partners in Honduras regarding accompaniment needs and working to develop a model and build a team that can begin to respond more fully to those needs. We are also in conversation with Coordination for International Accompaniment in Guatemala (CAIG-ACOGUATE) regarding their accompaniment model, collaboration around training for accompaniers and security measures. We will participate in the bi-monthly phone calls of the Honduras Solidarity Network (HSN) and collaborate with Chuck Kaufman regarding the Emergency Response Network (ERN).

If you or your organization is interested in doing long-term accompaniment work, or sponsoring a long-term volunteer accompanier, please let us know. At this time (September 2010) and for the next several months, the project is looking for individuals with prior accompaniment-related experience in a related context and a high level of Spanish who can help respond to emergent accompaniment needs while supporting the establishment of the project in Tegucigalpa.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Jennifer Atlee:
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WHAT TO DO? (info@rightsaction.org, www.rightsaction.org)

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for community based groups in the pro-democracy / anti-military regime movement, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

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FALL 2010 SPEAKERS:

Contact Rights Action to plan educational presentations in your community, school, place of worship, home, about the tireless and courageous Honduras pro-democracy movement.

EDUCATIONAL DELEGATIONS TO CENTRAL AMERICA:

Form your own group and/ or join one of our educational delegation-seminars to learn first hand about community development, human rights and environmental struggles.

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