Rights Action April 12, 2011

Letter To The Inter-American Development Bank & The Governments Of Canada & The Usa

By Rights Action

To Whom It May Concern:

Please withdraw any participation in or endorsement of the "Honduras is Open for Business" forum (<u>http://www.hondurasopenforbusiness.com/</u>) to take place in San Pedro Sula, May 5-6, 2011.

Participation in and/or endorsement of this forum legitimizes the undemocratic, military-backed regime in Honduras and turns a blind eye to State repression that has been widespread since the June 2009 military coup.

Since the 2009 military coup, human rights groups in Honduras & North America have not been able to keep up in our work of documenting and denouncing the repression (including killings, torture, rape, illegal detentions) carried out by the military-backed regime, against the peaceful pro-democracy movement.

PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS

Across the world, people are watching with admiration and respect the pro-democracy movements and struggles unfold in the Middle East – Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrein, Libya, Yemen.

And yet, in Honduras, the governments of the USA and Canada, and the IDB are supporting and doing business with a militarybacked regime that came to power through a military coup. Despite the on-going repression, the pro-democracy movement in Honduras continues to struggle for the restoration of democracy, for justice, and for the re-founding of their country and State. Small, courageous steps forward towards democracy in the Middle East; major steps backwards against democracy in Honduras.

We call on the governments of Canada and the USA and the IDB to do the right thing, and withdraw any support for, endorsement of or participation in this "Honduras Is Open for Repression" Business Forum.

Thank-you. For more information or questions, please contact us.

Annie Bird, annie@rightsaction.org Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org Karen Spring, in Tegucigalpa, spring.kj@gmail.com

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE "HONDURAS IS OPEN FOR REPRESSION" BUSINESS FORUM

During the conference, the Honduran regime will highlight the benefits of investing in Honduras and present 100 potential investment projects in six key sectors:

- energy
- infrastructure
- agribusiness
- tourism
- forestry, and
- service centers (i.e. call center)

EXPECTED TO ATTEND

Former U.S. President William Jefferson Clinton Former president of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez Mexican businessman Carlos Slim President of the Inter-American Development Bank, IDB, Luis Alberto Moreno

US GOVERNMENT ENDORSEMENT

http://honduras.usembassy.gov/sp-01-12-11-eng.html REMARKS DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR HUGO LLORENS ON "HONDURAS IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS" AT AMCHAM'S BREAKFAST CONFERENCE IN SAN PEDRO SULA, January 12, 2011

We all know that there is a strong competition for foreign investment, which motivates governments to improve the conditions that attract investment, such as the macro economy and infrastructure. I believe that this initiative of President Lobo's government and Secretary Mario Canahuati is excellent. Now is a good time to hold the "Honduras is Open for Business" conference, especially since we can see positive signs that the country is moving along the right path. The Honduran economy is recovering from the effects of the global crisis and the political crisis and we have already seen a substantial upturn in economic activity and domestic confidence. All of these signs point to a greater economic takeoff in 2011.

For example, it is worth pointing out the significant success in the coffee growing sector, which in the last quarter of 2010 had the largest harvest in Honduras's history and increased exports by 153 percent. This volume places Honduras as the largest producer in Central America, third in the Americas, and sixth in the world. This will not only result in increased foreign exchange inflows for the country, approximately US\$1 billion, but will also have a positive impact on growth, employment, and wealth generation, as well as strengthening the rural sector and combating poverty. We in the Embassy hope that economic growth will surpass the official projections.

Without a doubt, San Pedro Sula plays an important role as the industrial capital and the logistical and commercial center of the country, which makes it the ideal place to hold the "Honduras is Open for Business" conference. Even more important though is the role of all of you here. With your confidence and constant work, you are truly the driving force for a better future for Honduras by investing, creating jobs, and promoting competitiveness and productivity under the rubric of free market principles.

Logically, before venturing into an unknown market, new investors will look towards you, who have been operating in Honduras for many years, as a frame of reference. Any national efforts to capture new investment, as well as the promoting and holding of this conference, will be much more successful if it is complemented by the support of the existing investment community. The growth in new capital flows that Honduras would receive would benefit all in the long term.

We hope to continue our friendship and mutual efforts to strengthen the commercial ties between Honduras and the United States and thus we are supporting the "Honduras is Open for Business" conference.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ENDORSEMENT

http://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/eng/document.jsp?did=115 593

Honduras is open for Business 2011 Date: May 5-6, 2011 Venue: Fairgrounds of Expocentro Location: San Pedro Sula, Honduras Website: www.hondurasisopenforbusiness.com

The event Honduras is Open for Business 2011 will be held at the fairgrounds of EXPOCENTRO in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 5-6 May, 2011. The event is aimed towards the revival of Honduras as the most attractive Latin American destination for investment. More than 1000 companies around the world are invited to this forum which will undoubtedly be one of the most significant in Latin

America in recent years. The companies invited were carefully selected from 75 countries.

The event will also serve as a forum for potentially over 500 business conferences and meetings among private and public companies and government organizations, in order to start strong partnerships and the possibility of conducting buisness together. Over 3000 Honduran entrepreneurs have been invited to participate.

As an important component of the event, there will be an exhibition of products from the largest exporters in the country, who will find themselves on display for foreign investors with the intention to promote their products, explain production processes and technologies and answer questions from possible future business partners.

AGENDA

May 4th, 2011 Participant Arrival

7:00 am – 5:00 pm Transport and Arrival of Special Guests and Business Executives Participating in the Event to Participating Hotels Location: Ramón Villeda Morales International Airport, San Pedro Sula

8:00 pm – 10:00 pm Welcome Cocktail Reception Location: All Participating Hotels. Government Cabinet Ministers Participate at Each Cocktail Reception.

May 5th, 2011 Honduras is Open for Business

7:30 am – 8:30 am

Arrival of National and International Participants to Expocentro -CCIC

Transport from Hotels

8:30 am – 8:35 am

Initial Presentation by the Emcees

8:35 am – 8:40 am

Welcome Video - Honduras is Open for Business

8:40 am – 8:50 am

Welcoming Remarks to the International Forum

Mr. Mario Miguel Canahuati

Foreign Affairs Secretary of State

8:50 am – 9:20 am

Country Presentation

Address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of

Honduras

Mr. José Porfirio Lobo Sosa

9:20 am – 9:50 am

Country Presentation

Panel with Secretaries of State Responsible for Priority Sectors of the National Investment Promotion Program Panelists:

•Tourism: Ms. Nelly Jerez, Secretary of State

• Agribusiness: Mr. Jacobo Regalado, Secretary of State

- •Infrastructure: Mr. Miguel Rodrigo Pastor, Secretary of State
- Forestry: Mr. Trinidad Suazo, Minister- Director
- •Energy: Mr. Roberto Martínez Lozano, Minister- Manager

• Foreign Affairs: Mr. Mario Canahuati, Secretary of State

•Cabinet Coordinator: Ms. Maria Antonieta de Bográn, Presidential Appointee, Secretariat of the Presidential Office

9:50 am – 10:15 am

"Live Culture, Passion and Beauty- Mosaic of Honduran Ethnic and Folk" Show

10:15 am – 10:20 am

Emcees Present First Speaker

10:20 am – 10:50 am

Participation of the President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Mr. Luis Alberto Moreno Regional Development Vision for the Next Decade

10:50 am – 11:00 am

The Audience Talks to Luis Alberto Moreno, IDB President

11:00am – 11:05 am

Emcees Present Second Speaker

11:05 am – 11:35 am

Participation of the President (CEO) of the Arab Bank (Switzerland) Ltd., Mr. Nasri Victor Malhamé

Middle East Financial System Economic Perspectives for Latin America

11:35 am – 11:45 am

The Audience Talks to Nasri Victor Malhamé, CEO of the Arab Bank (Switzerland) Ltd.

11:45 am – 11:50 am

Emcees Present Third Speaker

11:50 am – 12:20 pm

Participation of Mr. Carlos Slim, World-Renowed Mexican

Businessman

Investing in Latin America, Factors that have Generated Trust and Confidence in Businesses Around the World

12:20 pm - 12:30 pm

The Audience Talks to Carlos Slim, Mexican Businessman

12:30 pm – 12:35 pm

Emcees Present Morning Speakers Constituted as an International Panel

12:35 pm – 1:00 pm

The Morning Speakers, Mr. Luis Moreno, Mr. Nasri Victor Malhamé and Mr. Carlos Slim Talk Together, on the Present and Future of Investment and Economic Development of Latin America 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Lunch

The Coordination Committee Cordially Invites to a Lunch at the Expocentro Facilities. Artistic & Cultural Events Accompany the Meal at a Time of Rest and Relaxation for all Guests.

2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Thematic Presentations

8:00 am – 6:00 pm

Business to Business Meetings, Commercial Exhibition, Situation Rooms, and Site Visits

See Additional Information.

6:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Transport of National and International Participants from

Expocentro to Participating Hotels

8:00 pm – 10:30 pm

Cocktail – Artistic and Cultural Event

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Honduras Invites National and International Participants to a Cocktail- Artistic and Cultural Event at the Club Árabe Hondureño. Theatre, Music, Art, Tastings, all in a Relaxed Business Environment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Business to Business Meetings

The B2B meetings will be pre-scheduled and held from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm each day. The personalized agenda for every corporate executive will be included in the folder provided to each participant on the day of their arrival in San Pedro Sula. 500 B2B meetings are expected to be held during Honduras is Open for Business.

Thematic Presentation

Each day, from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm, thematic presentations related to the productive sectors prioritized under the National Investment Promotion Program will be held. The final agenda of these presentations will de sent to the registered participants no later than April 30, 2011. The following conferences are anticipated on the afternoon of May 5th:

• Mainland China's Vision of Renewable Electricity Generation

•New Generation Financial Instruments, a Window for Latin American Businesses

•Free Trade Agreements, How Honduras Has Competitive Access to the Most Important Consumer Market of the Planet?

•Public-Private Partnerships as Triggering Development Factors in America

•Honduras...All is Here, the National Sustainable Tourism Strategy and its Investment Opportunities in Honduras Commercial Exhibition The exhibition is open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm during the two days of the event. The top 50 Honduran exporting companies will present their products, production processes, and medium and long-term plans.

Situation Rooms

Eleven Situation Rooms (Energy, Infrastructure, Tourism, Agribusiness, Business Services, Forestry, Charter Cities, Natural Resources, Regional Development, Free Trade Agreements, and Legal Framework) will operate from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. In each room, participants will find experts that will present projects and specific information relating to each sector. Business executives will find these facilities (Situation Rooms) to be an ideal space to discover, in depth, the different investment opportunities in Honduras.

Site Visits to Industrial Parks and Puerto Cortés

Located on the Honduran Caribbean Coast, Puerto Cortés is the most important Port in the Central American Region, and an important trade hub. Visits to Puerto Cortés will unveil its unique geographical location and enabled infrastructure to exploit this condition. On the other hand, the Honduran Industrial Parks are, without a doubt, the most developed in the region. Technology, services, logistics, and human resources are some of the aspects that can be appreciated during these visits. Visits to Puerto Cortés and the industrial parks will be held by prior reservations made at the information stations located at the participating hotels and Expocentro. The visits are optional and, each site (Puerto Cortés or the Industrial Parks) the visits will take approximately 2 hours.

May 6th, 2011

Honduras is Open for Business

7:30 am – 8:30 am

Arrival of National and International Participants to Expocentro – CCIC

Transport from Hotels

8:30 am – 8:40 am

Initial Presentation by the Emcees

8:40 am – 9:10 am

Participation of the ex President of Colombia, Mr. Alvaro Uribe

The Role of Governments in a Region Called to Succeed

9:10 am – 9:25 am

The Audience Talks to Alvaro Uribe, ex President of Colombia 9:25 am – 9:30 am

Emcees Present Second Speaker

9:30 am – 10:00 am

Participation of Mr. Wang Zhiquan, President of the International Economic Cooperation Society of the People's Republic of China Latin America from the Asian Economic Outlook

10:00 am – 10:15 am

The Audience Talks to Wang Zhiquan, President of the International Economic Cooperation Society of the People's Republic of China

10:15 am – 10:20 am

Emcees Present Third Speaker

10:20 am – 10:50 am

Participation of Mr. Paul Romer, Economist- Member of the

Stanford Center for International Development

Charter Cities, the Honduran Case

10:50 am – 11:00 am

The Audience Talks to Paul Romer, Economist

11:00am – 11:05 am

Emcees Present Fourth Speaker

11:05 am – 11:35 am

Participation of Mr. (Pending Confirmation – High Ranking Cabinet Member of the United States of America)

11:35 am – 11:50 am

The Audience Talks to American Cabinet Member

11:50 am – 12:00 m

Emcees Present Morning Speakers Constituted as an International Panel

12:00 m – 12:30 pm

The Morning Speakers, Mr. Alvaro Uribe, Mr. Wang Zhiquan, Mr. Paul Romer and (pending) Talk Together, on the Present and Future of Investment and Economic Development of Latin America 12:30 pm – 1:00 pm

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Closing Ceremony- International Business Forum

The President of the Republic, Mr. José Porfirio Lobo Sosa Presides Over the Closing Ceremony to the International Business Forum, Inviting Participants to Continue Participating in the B2B Meetings, Situation Rooms, Thematic Presentations, Commercial Exhibition, and Site Visits to Industrial Parks and Puerto Cortés in the Afternoon. 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Lunch

The Coordination Committee Cordially Invites to a Lunch at the Expocentro Facilities. Artistic & Cultural Events Accompany the Meal at a Time of Rest and Relaxation for all Guests.

2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

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See Additional Information.

6:00 pm – 6:30 p

Transport of National and International Participants from Expocentro to Participating Hotels

8:30 pm – 11:30 pm

Presidential Dinner – Closing of Honduras is Open for Business The President of the Republic, Mr. Porfirio Lobo Sosa, Invites National and International Participants to the Presidential Dinner that Closes the Honduras is Open for Business at the Omoa Castle, National Archaeological Heritage and Jewel. Again, Artistic Participations and the Honduran Cultural Wealth will be Shared with those Present on the Trip Through our Nation's Historical Moments.

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Thematic Presentations

Each day, from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm, thematic presentations related to the productive sectors prioritized under the National Investment Promotion Program will be held. The final agenda of these presentations will de sent to the registered participants no later than April 30, 2011. The following conferences are anticipated on the afternoon of May 6th:

•Renewabe Energy Generation- A Time for Solar Energy

•The New Honduran Investment Legal and Regulatory Framework

•Macroeconomic Stability, the Current Agreement with the International Monetary Fund

•The Service Industry, Call Centers and Back Offices, Where Does the Country's High Competitiveness Reside?

•Agribusiness and Forestry, High Potential in Honduras Commercial Exhibition

The exhibition is open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm during the two days of the event. The top 50 Honduran exporting companies will present their products, production processes, and medium and long-term plans.

Situation Rooms

Eleven Situation Rooms (Energy, Infrastructure, Tourism,

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WHAT TO DO – WRITE LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND TO THE IDB

asking that Canada and the USA withdraw from any participation in, or endorsement of the "Honduras is Open for Repression" Business Forum

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT: http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/ MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC

GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA David Johnston Rideau Hall, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A1 info@gg.ca, (613) 993-8200, 800 465-6890 Duncan Mousseau, Director of Policy, Planning and Correspondence Office of the Secretary to the Governor General DMousseau@GG.CA

PRIME MINISTER Stephen Harper harpes@parl.gc.ca Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda 509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6 <u>Oda.B@parl.gc.ca</u>

Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon 509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6 <u>cannol@parl.gc.ca</u>

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Elizabeth May, leader, Green Party Saanich Gulf Islands EDA, Box 20076, Sidney, BC, V8L-5C9 emaytowin@greenparty.ca

Michael Ignatieff, leader, Liberal Party 656 The Queensway, Etobicoke, ON, M8Y-1K7 <u>ignatm@parl.gc.ca</u>

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John McKay, Liberal, Scarborough-Guildwood (613) 992-1447, <u>MckayJ@parl.gc.ca</u>, 613-947-4609 Claire Lehan, Legislative Assistant (613) 992-6512, <u>McKayJ8@parl.gc.ca</u> 549-D Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6

Kevin Sorenson, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Room 518, Justice Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6 (613) 947-4608, SorenK@parl.gc.ca, 613-992-2971

Dean Allison, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairperson 4994 King Street, Beamsville, ON, LOR-1B0 <u>allison.d@parl.gc.ca</u>, 905-995-2772

CANADIAN Embassy in Costa Rica (responsible for Honduras) Ambassador Neil Reeder (506) 2242-4400, (506) 2242-4411, <u>sjcra@international.gc.ca</u> Honduras Office of the Canadian Embassy Centro Financiero Banexpo, 3 Piso, Boulevard San Juan Bosco, Colonia Payaquí, Tegucigalpa (504) 232-4551; <u>tglpa@international.gc.ca</u>

AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE OAS H.E. Allan Culham wshdc-prmoas@international.gc.ca (202) 682-1768

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US GOV'T OFFICES AND POLITICIANS

WHITE HOUSE: http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/, 202-456-1111, Comment Line: 202-456-1414

CONGRESS: Go to <u>http://www.house.gov/</u> to get info for your member of Congress, and call: 202-224-3121

SENATE: Go to <u>http://www.senate.gov/</u> to get contact for your Senator, and call: 202-224-3121

STATE DEPARTMENT: 202 647-8947

STATE DEPARTMENT - Office of Western Hemisphere Affairs: 202 647-0834, <u>WHAAsstSecty@State.Gov</u>

AMBASSADOR CRAIG KELLY, Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary, Western Office of Hemisphere Affairs: <u>KellyC@state.gov</u>

MARIA OTERO, Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs; c/o Laura Pena, Assistant: <u>PenaL@state.gov</u>

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AMBASSADOR HUGO LLORENS, U.S. Embassy in Honduras, LlorensH@state.gov, 504 2236-9320 ext. 4268, 2236-9037. Silvia Eiriz, Eirizs@state.gov AMBASSADOR to the OAS H.E. Carmen Lomellin, (202) 647-9430

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ADDRESSES – INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

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Multilateral Investment Fund 1300 New York Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20577, USA Tel: (202) 942-8211 mifcontact@iadb.org

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Mildred Rivera News and media affairs coordinator (202) 623-2319 mildredr@iadb.org

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WHAT TO DO – MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS for HONDURAS' PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

To make a tax-deductible donation for community based organizations in Honduras' pro-democracy movement working to defend human rights and the environment and to eradicate poverty and re-found their nation-state, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887 CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-118

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS:

http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm; or go to: www.rightsaction.org. (Credit card donations can be done anonymously) FOR DONATION OF STOCK: contact info@rightsaction.org. (Stock donations can be done anonymously – have your stockbroker contact info@rightsaction.org)

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, MORE INFORMATION?

Annie Bird, annie@rightsaction.org Karen Spring, in Tegucigalpa, spring.kj@gmail.com Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org

Thank-you.

- Please re-distribute this article all around, citing author and source
- To get on/off Rights Action's listserv: <u>www.rightsaction.org</u>