

Rights Action
August 30, 2013

Three Members Of Tolupan Indigenous Group Murdered In Yoro
By Honduras Accompaniment Project (PROAH), August 27, 2013

Deafening Silence Continues from Governments of the USA and Canada,
Legitimizing and Doing 'Business As Usual' the Military Backed Regime,
Turning a Blind Eye to State Repression

- What To Do: see below
- Humanitarian Relief Funds Needed For Families Of 3 Assassinated People: see below

Three Members Of Tolupan Indigenous Group Murdered In Yoro
By Honduras Accompaniment Project (PROAH,
<http://hondurasaccompanimentproject.wordpress.com>), August 27, 2013
<http://hondurasaccompanimentproject.wordpress.com/2013/08/27/mining-three-members-of-tolupan-indigenous-group-murdered-in-yoro/>



(Family members of the victims gather. Photo @ PROAH)

Three indigenous Honduran Tolupan were shot and killed on Sunday, August 25, 2013, at a private residence in Locomapa, Yoro, in northern

Honduras. The victims were Maria Enriqueta Matute, 71, from the Community of San Francisco Campo, Armando Funez Medina, 46, of Las Brisas, and Ricardo Soto Funez, 40, of Cabeza de Vaca.

Witnesses say the killings were committed by two local men under contract by wealthy miners illegally extracting the mineral antimony from the lands of the indigenous Tolupan people of Yoro.

This occurs in a context of increasing intimidation and violence against communities which peacefully oppose mining on their territory, a situation which is met with impunity (see latest article on La Nueva Esperanza).

In the case of Locomapa, the community had organized to protect their resources and to oppose mining on their land. They had spoken on the radio, denouncing the illegal exploitation by powerful mining interests and by loggers. Members of the community decided to set up a road block, allowing local traffic, but stopping mining vehicles and illegal loggers. It was on the 12th day of this roadblock that the killings occurred.

According to residents, the shootings allegedly were carried out by hitmen of the mining company. Locals say the two accused live in a nearby community and are corrupt members of the indigenous council who had directly threatened to kill the activists before the shooting, telling the wife of one of the murdered men to prepare the casket.

Eyewitnesses say the two perpetrators arrived at the roadblock on motorcycle at 5:30 Sunday afternoon, drunk, and opened fire on the dozen or so activists there. Two men died in the entryway to Maria Enriqueta Matute's house. Then she was shot as she came out to see what was happening.

The two suspects remained free Monday, and reportedly returned to the same house three times, to threaten and intimidate the grieving families who were awaiting the bodies from the morgue.

Caskets carrying the remains were transported by pickup to the community Monday night, where the three were waked at the house where they died. They were buried Tuesday morning, August 27.

The local community and human rights organizations are asking for justice in the case. Several other community members have been directly threatened by the same men.

REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE IN HONDURAS DO NOT JUST HAPPEN – THEY ARE POLICY

The situation of repression and impunity continue unabated in Honduras. Please send copies of this information, and your own letters, to your Canadian and American politicians (MPs, Congress members and Senators) and to your own media.

Since the June 2009 military coup, that ousted the democratically elected government, Honduras has become the 'Murder Capital of the world'. State repression has reached the levels of the worst years of the 1980s.

Since the coup, the U.S. and Canadian governments have 'legitimized the illegitimate' post-coup regime. North American companies and investors have increased their business activities in mining, sweatshops, tourism, etc, in Honduras since the coup. The repressive regime remains in power due in large part to its political, economic and military relations with the U.S. and Canada.

There are no signs that this repression, violence, corruption and impunity will decrease, even as a majority of Hondurans courageously support the LIBRE political party that will participate in the November 2013 presidential elections ... in a hope of putting an end to their nightmare.

Across Honduras, community based organizations in the pro-democracy movement need considerably more human rights accompaniment, funding, media attention on the harms and violations and education and activism in Canada and the U.S.

CONTACT

- Member Of Parliament:
<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>
- Congress: <http://www.house.gov/> to get info for your member of Congress, and call: 202-224-3121

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

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS (in Canada and the U.S.) to support grassroots organizations and their community- and environmental defense struggles in Guatemala and Honduras, and to provide humanitarian relief funds to the families of these 3 victims in Yoro, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- CANADA: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS can be made (in Canada and U.S.):

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- to donate stock, contact: info@rightsaction.org

Comments / Questions: info@rightsaction.org

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