

Canadian Randy Jorgensen Threatens More Evictions Of Garifuna Communities For International Tourism Interests

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(Randy Jorgensen, left, with mayor of Trujillo and Pepe Lobo, right, de facto president of Honduras put in power after 2009 U.S. and Canadian backed military coup.)

Canadian Porn King, Randy Jorgensen, Threatens to Evict Garifuna Guadalupe Community from Ancestral Territories

13 October, 2016, by Dina Meza

(translated for rights action by Lori Berenson)

<http://www.pasosdeanimalgrande.com/index.php/en/denuncias/item/1534-el-rey-del-porno-canadiense-randy-jorgensen-amenaza-con-desalojar-comunidad-garifuna-de-guadalupe-de-su-territorio-ancestral>

Once again the Garifuna Communities in Trujillo Bay are being harassed by foreigners who claim to own their communal lands. In this case, in the Guadalupe Community in Colon, where a group of lawyers, accompanied by members of the National Police, harassed Garifuna people on their own lands where they had initiated their own community tourism project, according to information published by OFRANEH (Garifuna and Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras) on October 13, 2016.

This community operated tourism project had been vandalized and abandoned a few years ago due to the presence of a group of thugs in the area, explained OFRANEH on their Facebook page.

In 2007, the community presented charges at the Prosecutor's Office for Ethnic Groups against the Canadian Randy Jorgensen, for the illegal acquisition of lands. Unfortunately, authorities ignored the accusation, despite the fact that the community titles issued by the National Agrarian Institute (INA) explicitly state that the collective, community-owned lands cannot be sold or transferred to anyone from outside the community. However, the municipality's land-registry office has records of these illegal sales.

After the 2009 military coup, the Porn King (the nickname with which he is known in Canada) carried out massive land purchases, seizing lands, for which he faces an on-going court case in the city of Trujillo. [Most recently, Jorgensen failed again to appear in court in May 2016, for this case; the local judge, however, refuses to order Jorgensen's detention for failure to appear.]

Jorgensen rapidly acquired environmental licenses for the urbanizations he built in the buffer zone of the Capiro and Calentura National Park.

The Garifuna communities are defenseless against the massive entry of foreigners, mostly Canadians, who arrived in the area, and exacerbated social strife instead of creating jobs for the Garifuna people. The asymmetry of power that exists and the Porn King's connections with the post-military coup administrations, has led to outright plunder.

The inhabitants of Guadalupe that re-possessed their communal lands that had been illegally sold were now threatened with eviction.

Separately, a few weeks ago, there was an eviction attempt in the community of Santa Fe, where the National Police, accompanied by a group of hit-men, proceeded to burn down the homes.

The Garifuna coast has recently been besieged by entrepreneurs in tourism, some associated with organized crime allied with Honduran state officials, to plunder the territories of our people. Narco-municipalities have been a determining factor in the 'legalization' of the illegal land purchases.

There is clear jurisprudence in the Inter-American System of Justice, that determines the rights that indigenous people have over our ancestral lands. Nevertheless, In Honduras, the weak community land-titles have often been taken apart, at the whim of government authorities.

We call on the Office of the Prosecution to investigate the land purchases made by the Porn King Randy Jorgensen and his henchmen, and we demand respect for the Garifuna People's ancestral ownership of the lands.

We want to make clear that OFRANEH will not allow the violation of the rights of the Guadalupe Community, much less the eviction of a community from its ancestral territory.

Garifuna and Black and Fraternal Organization of Honduras OFRANEH

El Rey del Porno Canadiense, Randy Jorgensen, amenaza con desalojar comunidad Garífuna de Guadalupe de su territorio ancestral

Thursday, 13 October 2016, por Dina Meza

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Una vez más las comunidades Garífunas en la Bahía de Trujillo se ven acosados por extranjeros que aducen ser propietarios de terrenos comunitarios. En este caso, en la comunidad de Guadalupe, Colón, un grupo de abogados, acompañados de miembros de la Policía Nacional, acosaron a Garífunas que hacían presencia en un terreno en el cual se encontraba construido un proyecto de turismo comunitario, según una publicación de la Organización Fraternal Negra de Honduras, OFRANEH difundida este 13 de octubre de 2016.

Ese proyecto fue vandalizado hace algunos años y abandonado ante la presencia de un grupo de forajidos en la zona, explica la OFRANEH en su página de Facebook.

En el año 2007 la comunidad denunció ante la Fiscalía de las Etnias a Randy Jorgensen, por la adquisición ilegal de terrenos. Desafortunadamente las autoridades hicieron caso omiso de la denuncia, y a pesar que los títulos comunitarios expedidos por el Instituto Nacional Agrario (INA), explícitamente indican que las tierras comunitarias de la comunidad no se pueden vender o transferir a personas ajenas a la comunidad; la Municipalidad a través de su catastro registró las ventas ilegales.

A partir del golpe de estado el Rey del Porno -como se le conoce en el Canadá- efectuó compras masivas de tierra, usurpando terrenos, delito por el cual procede un juicio en su contra en la ciudad de Trujillo. Jorgesen obtuvo licencias ambientales express, para las urbanizaciones que construyó en la zona de amortiguamiento del Parque Nacional Capiro y Calentura.

Las comunidades Garífunas se han visto indefensas ante la incursión masiva de extranjeros en su mayoría canadienses que han llegado a la zona, exacerbando las condiciones sociales más que creando fuentes de trabajo para los Garífunas. La asimetría existente y las conexiones del Rey del Porno con las administraciones post golpe de Estado, ha dado lugar a un evidente despojo.

Los habitantes de Guadalupe que han tomado posesión del terreno comunitario vendido de forma ilegal, fueron amenazados de ser desalojados. Cabe señalar que hace algunas semanas se dio un intento de desalojo en la comunidad de Santa Fe, donde la Policía Nacional, acompañados de un grupo de sicarios procedieron a quemar las viviendas.

La costa Garifuna en los últimos ha sido asediada por empresarios turísticos, algunos de ellos asociados con el crimen organizado aliados a funcionarios estatales, para saquear el territorio de nuestro pueblo. Narcomunicipalidades han sido un factor determinante para legalizar las compras ilegales de tierra.

Existe una amplia jurisprudencia del Sistema Interamericano de Justicia, enfática en los derechos que poseemos los pueblos indígenas sobre nuestros territorios ancestrales. No obstante en Honduras se han obtenido menguados títulos comunitarios que han sido desmembrados frecuentemente, al antojo de las autoridades gubernamentales.

Hacemos un llamado al Ministerio Público para que proceda e investigue las compras de tierra efectuadas por el rey del Porno Randy Jorgensen y sus secuaces; así mismo exigimos se respete la posesión ancestral territorial del Pueblo Garifuna.

Advertimos que la OFRANEH no permitirá se violenten los derechos de la comunidad de Guadalupe, ni mucho menos que se impulse un desalojo a la comunidad de su territorio ancestral.

Organización Fraternal Negra Hondureña, OFRANEH

Canadian Porn King on Trial for Tourism Projects in Honduras

- **Watch:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWqoB5GTfm8>

On November 13th, 2015, Canadian tourism developer Randy Jorgensen, aka “The Porn King” (according to MacLeans magazine, 1993), appeared in court on charges of illegally appropriating ancestral Garifuna lands. The court ruled partially in Jorgensen’s favour, choosing not to go to a full trial for the time being, but local communities smell corruption and vow to appeal this ruling in Honduran courts and keep on fighting all the way to international tribunals, meaning that Jorgensen’s and others’ investments remain in legal limbo and could still be in jeopardy.

Conversation with Miriam Miranda of OFRANEH about the Garífuna People in Honduras

<http://us9.campaign-archive1.com/?u=ea011209a243050dfb66dff59&id=c7aadc14f1>

Recorded by Warwick Fry (Latin Radical), June 9, 2016, in office of OFRANEH in Sambo Creek, during a Rights Action / Mir Peace Centre delegation to Honduras, June 4-12, 2016. Translation to english by Grahame Russell of Rights Action.)

- **Listen:** <http://tortillaconsal.com/tortilla/es/node/18085>

Miriam Miranda speaks about: history of Garífuna people in northern Honduras; negative impacts, repression and human rights violations caused by 2009 U.S. and Canadian-backed military coup; Canadian and U.S. driven tourism industry (including discussion of Randy Jorgensen, the Canadian “porn king”); U.S. led “war on drugs”; climate change and resultant

repression and human rights violations caused by African palm production industry and hydro-electric dam building industries; and the long history of U.S. domination in Honduras.

“Canadian Tourism and Real Estate Developer Appears Before Honduran Judge”

By Karen Spring, November 14, 2015, <http://www.karenspring.com/2015/11/canadian-tourism-and-real-estate.html>

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More information

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- Grahame Russell, Rights Action, info@rightsaction.org

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