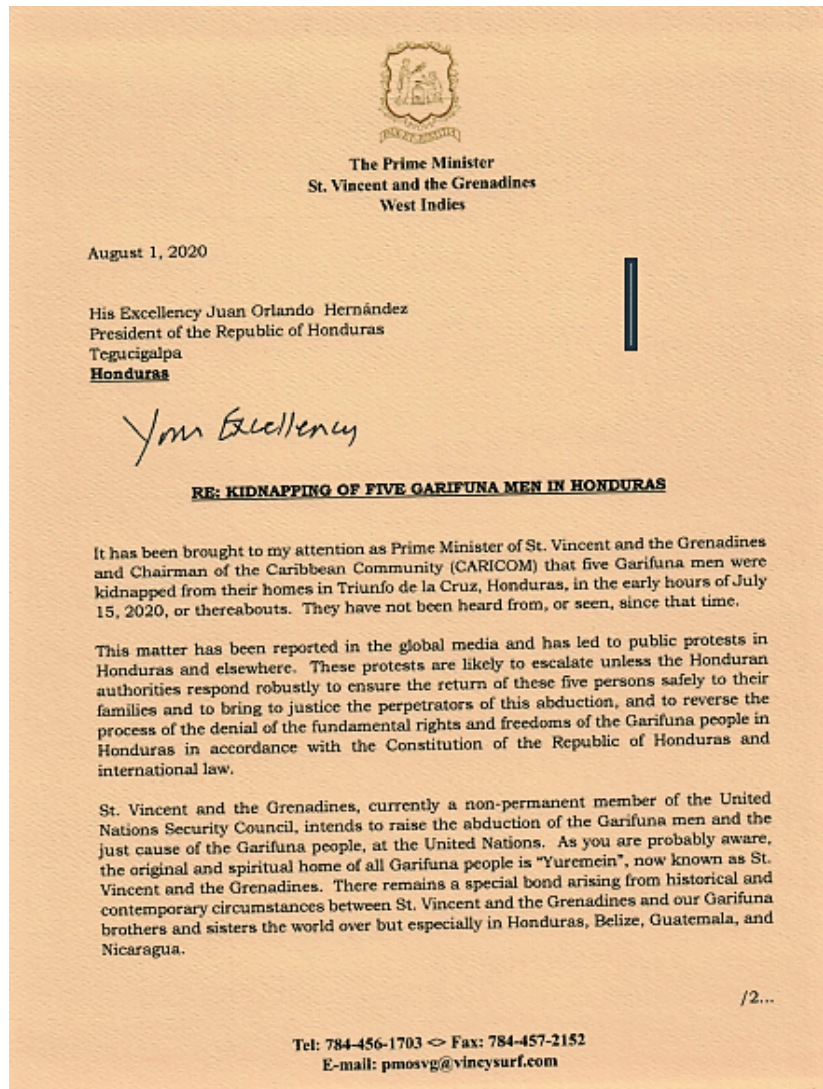


Disappearance of the “Garifuna five” in Honduras Letter from Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/disappearance-of-the-garifuna-five-in-honduras>

Here, a letter of concern from Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a country that is not politically, economically, militarily propping up the military-backed, narco-regime in power in Honduras.

This letter contrasts with the lack of response from the leaders of the countries (the United States and Canada) that most fully support the regime in Honduras – a “democratic allie” since the 2009 military coup ousted Honduras’ last democratically elected government.



*His Excellency Juan Orlando Hernández
President of the Republic of Honduras*

August 1, 2020

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The reports of the kidnapping indicate that armed assailants, dressed in police clothing, arrived in three vehicles and went house-to-house, forcing the men into vehicles at gunpoint. It is reported in the prestigious British newspaper, *The Guardian*, that "the vehicles did not have licences plates, which is a tactic used by both Honduran state security forces and criminal gangs".

The abduction of "the Garifuna five" comes against the backdrop of widespread violations of the rights of the Garifuna people, including their ownership rights to ancestral lands.

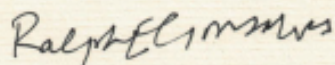
For the record, the five kidnapped Garifuna men are: Alberth Snider Centeno Thomas, a 27-year old community activist who has advocated for the Honduran government to compensate the Garifuna people for "stolen land"; Milton Joel Martinez Alvarez; Suami Aparicio Mejia; Junior Rafael Juarez Mejia; and someone called "Mamba" but whose full name is yet to be confirmed.

I should point out that this is not merely an internal matter for Honduras; this is an international human rights issue. Honduras has long been a country which subscribes to international norms, laws, and international organisations which, among other things, have as their guiding commitments a respect for individual rights and the rule of law. The lawless and criminal campaign against the Garifuna people, and their leaders, in Honduras must stop. I am sure that you would agree with me on this!

Please be assured that St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and by extension the Caribbean Community, are prepared to work with your government to address the plight of the Garifuna people in Honduras. Immediately, though, we need to know urgently, what is happening to the case of the kidnapping of "the Garifuna five"! Justice must be done!

All the best to you, your family, your government, and the people of the Republic of Honduras.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves
Prime Minister
and Chairman of CARICOM

More information

- OFRANEH (Organizacion Fraternal Negra Hondureña): @ofraneh, garifuna@ofraneh.org, www.ofraneh.org, <http://www.ofraneh.wordpress.com>
- Rights Action: Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org, www.rightsaction.org
- Honduras Solidarity Network: Karen Spring, spring.kj@gmail.com, @hondurassol, www.hondurassolidarity.org

Recent news: The Garifuna Five

- “Minority Group Fears ‘Genocide’ in Trump-Backed Honduras”, By Jeremy Kryt, The Daily Beast, Aug. 10, 2020, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/garifuna-minority-group-fears-genocide-in-trump-backed-honduras>
- “Indigenous men in Honduras are being abducted. Are the police to blame?”, By Jackie McVicar, August 5, 2020, America Magazine, <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2020/08/05/indigenous-men-honduras-are-being-abducted-are-police-blame>

Archives on OFRANEH

Articles, reports, films & urgent actions related to OFRANEH's work & struggle in defense of Garifuna territory & rights: <https://rightsaction.org/ofraneh>

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Emergency funds – Community defense and Covid19 response

Even as Rights Action continues to send funds for Covid19 response work of long-term partner groups in Honduras and Guatemala, we request funds now for OFRANEH as they respond to the forced disappearance of Garifuna land defenders from Triunfo de la Cruz.

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