

Civil society organisations in America and Europe condemn the murder of Berta Cáceres, Lenca indigenous leader and human rights defender

March 4, 2016. The signatory networks and organisations who support the defence of human rights in Honduras, condemn the murder of Lenca indigenous leader Berta Cáceres, coordinator of the Civic Council of Grassroots and Indigenous Organisations in Honduras (*Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras – COPINH*), which occurred earlier on Thursday at her home in La Esperanza, Intibucá, Honduras.

Berta Cáceres spent her life defending the territorial and cultural rights of indigenous peoples, Garífuna peoples and peasants. She was recognised nationally and internationally as a human rights defender, particularly of the rights of women and indigenous peoples. In 2015 her work was internationally recognised when she received the Environmental Goldman Prize, the highest distinction for activists who work on the defence of territory, natural resources and Mother Earth. Berta, with her comprehensive vision of humanity that characterises indigenous cosmovisions, always stood in solidarity with the causes of other peoples.

In recent years, Berta was the victim of harassment, persecution, intimidation, stigmatisation and criminalisation both by state and non-state actors, due to her activities the defending human rights of indigenous communities oppose to the installation of hydroelectric and mining operations in their territories without their free, prior and informed consent. She struggled, particularly for the recovery of the lands of the Lenca people in Rio Blanco, Intibucá, in light of the construction of the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam by the national company Energy Developments S.A. of C.V. (*Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. de C.V. – DESA*). This project receives both, national (from FICOHSA company) and international funds, including from the Netherlands, Finland and Germany. Since 2009, she was beneficiary of precautionary measures by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (MC 196/09), but these measures were not properly implemented.

Faced with this terrible crime:

1) We stand in solidarity with Berta's family, with the Lenca people and members of COPINH and all social organisations in Honduras who are in mourning today.

2) We condemn the murder of Berta and we urge the Honduran authorities to invest all the necessary resources to independently investigate, prosecute, and punish those materially and intellectually responsible, to ensure the protection of witnesses, and to take appropriate measures, including publicly dignifying the memory of Berta.

3) We call on Honduran institutions to fulfil their duty to ensure the protection of all people who defend human rights in their country and the proper implementation of the *Law on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Operators*, currently in force in Honduras, so that incidents like this do not happen again.

4) We urge the international community to condemn this murder and take all necessary measures to ensure that the Honduran State fulfils its human rights obligations. And we call on them to adopt adequate measures to ensure that bilateral or multilateral financial support for Honduras contributes to the full respect for and realization of human rights

“In our world views we are beings of earth and water and corn, we Lenca people are the ancestral custodians of the rivers, which are also kept safe by the spirits of the young girls, who teach us that giving our lives in different ways to defending the rivers, is to give our lives for the good of humanity and this planet”. Berta Cáceres, speech upon receiving the Goldman prize in 2015.

ACAT-Suiza
ACT Alliance EU
Action Solidarité Tiers Monde (ASTM) (Luxemburgo)
Asociación de Investigación y Especialización sobre Temas Iberoamericanos (AIETI) (España)
Asociación Paz con Dignidad
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de España (APDHE)
AWO International e.V.
Banktrack (Países Bajos)
Bischöfliche Aktion Adveniat e.V. para los pueblos en América Latina y el Caribe (Alemania)
Brigadas de Paz Internacional (PBI)
Broederlijk Delen (Bélgica)
CAFOD
Calala Fondo de Mujeres (España)
CCFD (Francia)
CIDSE
CISV (Italia)
Collettivo Italia Centro America CICA (Italia)
Comisión de Derechos Humanos Hispano Guatemalteca (CDHHG)
Comisiones Obreras de Madrid (CCOO) (España)
Cooperació – Barcelona (España)
Coordinadora de Organizaciones no Gubernamentales de Desarrollo de España (CONGDE) (España)
Copenhaguen Initiative for Central America and Mexico (CIFCA)
DIAKONIA (Suecia)
Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (España)
FIAN Internacional
Fondo de Acción Urgente América Latina y el Caribe
Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika e.V. (Centro de Investigación y Documentación Chile-América Latina)
Forum Honduras Schweiz (Foro Honduras Suiza)
Forum Syd (Suecia)
FOS (Bélgica)
Friends of the Earth Finland (Finlandia)
Front Line Defenders
FOS-Centroamérica
Fundación Heinrich Böll México, Centroamérica y El Caribe
Grupo Sur
Guatemala Komitee (Comité de Guatemala) (Alemania)
Guatemala Human Rights Commission

Guatemala Solidarität Österreich (Solidaridad con Guatemala de Austria) (Austria)
 Guatemalagruppe Nürnberg e. V. (Grupo para Guatemala de Nuremberg) (Alemania)
 Guatemalanetz Bern (Red Guatemala-Suiza de Berna) (Suiza)
 Hondurasdelegation (Delegación a Honduras)
 ICCO Cooperation (Países Bajos)
 IEPALA-UCM (España)
 Informationsgruppe Lateinamerika–IGLA (Grupo de Información sobre América Latina) (Austria)
 Iniciativas de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (ICID)
 INKOTA-netzwerk (INKOTA – Red Ecuménica)
 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) (Francia)
 INTERTEAM (Suiza)
 International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
 Kindernothilfe e.V. (Alemania)
 Komitè Global Local Bolzano (Italia)
 Manitese (Italia)
 Manos Unidas (España)
 Medico International Suiza
 Menschenrechtskette Honduras (Cadena de Derechos Humanos Honduras, CADEHO)
 Misereor (Alemania)
 Movimiento por la Paz el Desarme y la Libertad (MPDL)
 Mundubat (España)
 Nicaragua-Forum Heidelberg (Alemania)
 Nicaragua-Verein Düsseldorf e.V. (Asociación Nicaragua en Düsseldorf) (Alemania)
 Observatorio protección defensores derechos humanos (FIDH, OMCT)
 Ökumenisches Büro für Frieden und Gerechtigkeit (Oficina Ecuménica por la Paz y la Justicia)
 Oxfam en Honduras (Honduras)
 Oxfam Solidarité (Oxfam Solidaridad) (Bélgica)
 Peace Watch Switzerland (PSW) (Suiza)
 Plataforma de Solidaridad con Chiapas y Guatemala de Madrid (España)
 Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad
 Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
 La Plataforma de Solidaridad con Chiapas y Guatemala de Madrid
 Red de Apoyo a Defensores y Defensoras de Derechos Humanos (DEFENRED)
 Red de solidaridad con el pueblo de Guatemala en Zurich (Suiza)
 Red Europea de Comités Oscar Romero
 Regional Latinoamericana de de la Unión Internacional de Trabajadores de la Alimentación, Agrícolas,
 Hoteles, Restaurantes, Tabaco y Afines (Rel-UITA)
 Rompiendo el Silencio
 Solfindos
 Solidair Met Guatemala
 Solidaridad Mundial (Bélgica)
 Solidaridad Suecia-América Latina (Suecia)
 SOLIFONDS (Zuerich)
 SweFOR - Movimiento Sueco por la Reconciliación (Suecia)
 terre des hommes (Suiza)

Transnational Institute (TNI) (Países Bajos)
 Trocaire (Irlanda)
 Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
 War on Want
 We effect (Suecia)
 Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika e.V. (FDCL) (Berlín)
 Zapapres e.V. - Honduras-Koordination Hamburg, Alemania
 AFSC (Comité de Servicio de los Amigos Americanos), Nacional (USA)
 Black Mesa Indigenous Support, AZ (USA)
 Comité en Solidaridad con Guatemala, Iglesia Congregacional de Needham, Needham, MA (USA)
 Copper Country Guatemala Accompaniment Project, Hancock, Michigan (USA)
 Denver Justice and Peace Committee, Denver, CO (USA)
 Heart of the Sky Fair Trade, Spring Green, WI (USA)
 Interfaith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA), St. Louis, MI (USA)
 Kickapoo/Guatemala Accompaniment Project, Viroqua, WI (USA)
 Lake Area Group Organizing in Solidarity with People of Guatemala-LAGOS, Minneapolis, MI (USA)
 Latin America Center, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver (USA)
 Leadership Alliance of Nevada, Reno, NV (USA)
 New Community Project, Peoria, AZ (USA)
 New Mayas Society, St. Louis, MI (USA)
 New Hampshire-Vermont Guatemala Accompaniment Project, NH/VT (USA)
 NISGUA (La Red en Solidaridad con el Pueblo de Guatemala), Oakland, CA (USA)
 Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, Olympia, WA (USA)
 Raizes Collective, Santa Rosa, CA (USA)
 Santa Elena Project of Accompaniment-SEPA, Oberlin, OH (USA)
 Toward Right Relationship Project, Boulder CO Friends Meeting, Boulder, CA (USA)
 Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Tucson, Tucson, AZ (USA)
 Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington-Partners for Arlington and Guatemala (UUCA-PAG) (USA)
 Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, Nacional (USA)
 Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Nacional (USA)
 Wyoming Accompaniment Project-WYGAP, Laramie, WY (USA)
 Young People for Change, Los Ángeles, CA (USA)
 Guatemala/Canada Solidarity Network of Kingston (Canada)
 Guatemala Community Network-Toronto (Canada)
 Guatemala Research Group, University of Northern BC, Prince George, BC (Canada)
 Solidaridad de Austria con Guatemala (Austria)
 Collectif Guatemala (Francia)