

His Excellency Mr Ivan Romero Martinez  
Embassy of Honduras  
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London, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016

HAUSFELD

LAMMP  
Latin American Mining Monitoring Programme

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Your Excellency,

We the undersigned, organisations and individuals committed to social justice and human rights, condemn in the strongest possible terms the murder of **Berta Cáceres**, the inspiring and internationally-renowned social activist who spent her life fighting for and defending indigenous peoples' rights to their lands, in particular defending them from the terrible impact of destructive mining projects. Berta, who was co-founder and General Coordinator of the Council of Indigenous and Popular Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), a social and political organisation supporting the indigenous and popular movements in Honduras, became a key leader in the Lenca struggle against the Agua Zarca Dam, a controversial development project which did not have the consent of local communities. Berta had filed complaints with the Honduran government and organised peaceful protests against the dam.

As a direct result of her human and environmental work, Berta was granted emergency protection measures by the Inter American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR). Despite several attempts to kill her and an escalation in threats in the weeks prior to her assassination, the Honduran government failed to provide Berta with the necessary police protection. Had the government implemented it, maybe she would be still alive today.

Furthermore it has come to our attention that **Gustavo Castro Soto**, member of the Red Mexicana de afectados por la minería (REMA), coordinator of Otros Mundos Chiapas A.C and member of the Movimiento Mexicano de Afectados por las Presas (MAPDER) was with Berta at the time of her death in the early hours of 3<sup>rd</sup> March. After surviving the armed attack and as a key witness, his life is in danger. Therefore the IACHR has requested that the Honduran government provide him with urgent police protection. Gustavo's life may very well depend on what the Honduran government does to protect him, especially now that he is not allowed to leave the country.

We call upon the Honduras government:

- To put an end to impunity, and to bring to justice the perpetrators of this abominable crime against **Berta Cáceres**, an environmental woman rights defender whose only “crime” was to promote and defend indigenous people’s rights
- To ensure the integrity and freedom of Mexican human rights defender **Gustavo Castro de Soto**
- To put an end to the practice of imposing projects on vulnerable indigenous communities without due consideration to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)
- To put an end to the persecution and criminalisation of Human Rights defenders. The Honduran government is under an obligation to guarantee their security, and is responsible for implementing all precautionary measures in their favour.

Signed

**London Mining Network (LMN)**

**Latin American Mining Monitoring Programme (LAMMP)**

**Environmental and Social Change**

**The Corner House**

**War on Want**

**The Gaia Foundation**

**Yes to Life, No to Mining Network**

**Corporate Watch**

**CAFOD**

**Guatemala Solidarity Network**

**CORE Coalition**

**Movimiento Jaguar Despierto**

**Roger Moody**

**Miles Litvinoff**

**Global Justice Now**

**PROGRESSIO 75**

**The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR)**

**CATAPA**

**EcoNexus**

**Coal Action Network (UK)**

**Deighton Pierce Glynn solicitors**

**Hausfeld & Co LLP**

**Bougainville Freedom Movement (Australia)**

**Trades Union Congress**

**Waste For Life**

**Dr Katy Jenkins**

**Bevis Gillett**

**Caroline Baillie, Chair of Engineering Education at UWA**