

Faith-based and Nongovernmental Groups Condemn Coup in Honduras; Express Concern for Human Rights Situation

Faith-based, human rights, and activist groups in the United States today joined in condemning the coup carried out June 28th against José Manuel Zelaya Rosales, the elected President of Honduras. President Zelaya was forcibly removed from his home by the military and put on a plane to Costa Rica. The coup took place on the very day that a controversial non-binding referendum about the Honduran constitution had been scheduled.

Actions by the Honduran military to arrest the President and force him out of the country cannot be accepted. The international community has called for President Zelaya's restoration; we urge the U.S. and other governments to work multilaterally to support the restoration of constitutional order. We understand that U.S. law requires the suspension of military aid in the case of a coup and urge that this suspension be fully implemented until constitutional order is restored.

President Zelaya's return will not, by itself, solve the political crisis in Honduras. Dialogue will be needed to resolve deep-seated conflicts over whether and how to revise the constitution, and strengthen a more participative political process. The poverty and marginalization that underlie all the political dynamics in Honduras, and that have stoked unrest, must be addressed. Zelaya's return is only a first step in a larger and more long-term process in Honduras.

The signers remain concerned about the safety of social and political activists, including trade union leaders, heads of organizations of small farmers and the rural poor, indigenous leaders, opposition politicians, and others. Many leaders, fearing arrest, are in hiding. Many media outlets were shuttered yesterday. We call on Honduran security forces to respect human rights and basic freedoms for all citizens.

Joy Olson
Executive Director
Washington Office on Latin America

Robert E. White
President
Center for International Policy

Adam Isacson
Director of Programs
Center for International Policy

Kimberly C. Stietz
Director for International Public Policy
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Washington Office

Simone Campbell, SSS
Executive Director
NETWORK, a National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

Stephen Coats
Executive Director
U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP)

Sharon Hostetler
Executive Director
Witness for Peace

Eric LeCompte
National Organizer
SOA Watch

Fr. Seamus Finn
Director
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Justice and Peace Office

Kate Horner
Policy Analyst
Friends of the Earth US

Katherine Hoyt
National Co-Coordinator
Nicaragua Network

Claudia Rodríguez
Policy Director
SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today

Amanda Martin
Director
Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA

Delvis Fernández Levy
President
Cuban American Alliance Education Fund

Sylvia Romo
Interim Executive Director
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)

John Lindsay-Poland

Director

Fellowship of Reconciliation Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean

Nan McCurdy

President

Ecumenical Committee of English speaking Church Personnel in Nicaragua (CEPRHI)

Kirsten Moller

Executive Director

Global Exchange

Freddie Schrider

Business Manager

Rights Action

Eva Seidelman

Program Assistant

International Labor Rights Forum

Miguel Robles

Founder/Coordinator

Alianza Latinoamericana por los Derechos de los Inmigrantes (ALIADI)

Tom Loudon

Co-Director

Quixote Center

Ana Perez

Executive Director

CARECEN SF- the Central American Resource Center

Laura Carlsen

Director, Americas Policy Program

Center for International Policy

Maria Hamlin Zuniga

Director

Centro de Informacion y Servicios de Asesoria en Salud

Rev. Jose Luis Casal, General Missioner

The Presbytery of Tres Rios

Presbyterian Church USA

June 30, 2009

Washington, DC

Distributed by the Latin America Working Group