

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Human Rights Crises Continues

Observers from the United States and Canada Travel to Honduras for November 24th Elections

Organizations from the United States and Canada are taking more than 160 people to Honduras to serve as election observers and human right observers for the upcoming national elections in which a new political party (LIBRE) founded out of the opposition to a 2009 military coup will be participating for the first time. The delegation is organized by the Honduras Solidarity Network - Alliance for Global Justice and the participants come from organizations, churches and communities from more than 8 states as well as from Canada and El Salvador.

“Our goal is to accompany the people of Honduras in their electoral process and as they seek social justice in their country”, said Chuck Kaufman of Alliance for Global Justice, “ we are very concerned about an atmosphere marked by extreme violence and harassment against the political opposition, journalists, human rights defenders, small farmers and indigenous communities and the role of US security aid in that crises.”

The elections are taking place at a time when international and Honduran human rights groups are expressing alarm at the conditions in Honduras and for the possibility of fair and free elections.

- On October 15th US Congressmen Grijalva, Honda and Hank Johnson sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry urging the State Department to monitor the potential militarization of the electoral process ahead of Honduras’ Nov. 24 presidential vote. The lawmakers highlight a “pattern of concerted attacks targeting human rights defenders and the opposition”. (<http://grijalva.house.gov/news-and-press-releases/rep-grijalva-honda-hank-johnson-urge-secretary-kerry-to-speak-against-militarization-of-civil-society-ahead-of-honduran-election/>)
- During the campaign thus far there have been 18 murders and 15 armed attacks against LIBRE candidates and activists according to a report by the U.S./Canada based organization, Rights Action (<http://www.rightsaction.org/action-content/killings-and-attempted-killings-honduras-may-2012-present-linked-electoral-process>)
- A new military-police force created by the current ruling party is raiding homes of LIBRE members. New threats and assassinations are occurring weekly. (<http://www.rightsaction.org/action-content/pre-election-persecution-increases-honduras-new-military-police-and-state-forces>).
- On October 28th Honduran human rights organizations testified at the Organization of American States’ Human Rights Commission on the threats and attacks against their members and on November 4th Amnesty International published a letter sent to all of the presidential candidates in which Guadalupe Marengo the Americas Deputy Programme Director stated that “The human rights situation in Honduras is dire and the future of the country hangs in the balance,” (

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/news/news-item/honduras-elections-should-mark-a-turning-point-for-human-rights>).

Participants are available for interviews. Please contact the press contacts listed above for more information.

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