

Global Demand for Justice for Berta Caceres Hits Streets



Tegucigalpa, June 16 (RHC)-- The cry for justice for murdered Honduran environmental leader Berta Caceres was amplified on Wednesday as international solidarity activists protested outside Honduran embassies in cities around the world. The demand was a “stop to death, impunity, and injustice” in the Central American country through a global day of action spearheaded by Caceres’ Lenca Indigenous movement.

The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Movements of Honduras, or COPINH, which Caceres cofounded over two decades ago to defend Lenca land, natural resources and sovereignty, has called for international support for two key demands -- ramping up pressure on Honduran authorities to take urgent action on the human and Indigenous rights crisis.

First, the action calls for an independent, international team of experts -- led through the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights -- to immediately involve itself in the case to ensure a thorough investigation into the murder of environmental and indigenous activist.

Berta Caceres’ family and movement members have demanded an independent probe since day one, expressing skepticism in the local justice system to carry out a reliable investigation given its track record of corruption, impunity and botched cases. But Honduran authorities have not answered their calls and have instead largely excluded family and colleagues from the process.

Second, the international protests also demand the “immediate and definitive cancellation” of the Agua Zarca dam project being built without the consent of the local Lenca community in Rio Blanco. Caceres reported dozens of death threats and other harassment in the years prior to her murder, including at the hands of agents allegedly linked to the company behind the dam, the private Honduran energy firm Desarrollos Energeticos SA, better known as DESA.

For COPINH, these demands are key, as they claim that Honduran authorities have so far acted in the name of “assuring that this crime will go unpunished.”

On Wednesday, famed Colombian human rights defender, peace activist, and former Senator Piedad Cordoba accompanied Berta’s family in Honduras.

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