

# *Violent murder of Garifuna leader in Honduras denounced*

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**The Garífuna communities have a long history of defending their territories. | Photo: Midia Avispa**

Tegucigalpa, January 30 (RHC)-- The Honduran Black Fraternal Organization (Ofraneh) and the Committee for the Defense of the Land denounced this Sunday the murder of another Garífuna leader in the Triunfo de la Cruz sector, on the Atlantic coast, in the north of the country.

In a statement, Ofraneh denounced the vicious murder of young Ricardo Arnául Montero, who was "an active member of the Land Defense Committee of the Garífuna community of Triunfo de la Cruz." The violent act was carried out on Saturday.

Arnau Montero was part of the security team of the Rio Gama sector, located in the vicinity of the recovered territory Secundino Torres, which is communal property and is located within the Punta Izopo National Park.

The Ofraneh communiqué emphasized that "given the disregard for the lives of our people and the high level of impunity that prevails in this country, we demand that the State assume its legal duty and due diligence and initiate a thorough investigation of this new vile and cowardly murder."

Members of the community of Triunfo de la Cruz and Ofraneh have repeatedly denounced death threats, allegedly from powerful financial interests, against members of the land committee and the community's sentence compliance commission.

According to media reports, to date there has been no response from the authorities on these allegations or on the return of the Playa Escondido sector to the community. The communities claim this lot as theirs and are awaiting compliance with a ruling for its return issued by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

According to the Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations, in this Central American nation there were registered during 2022 aggressions to at least 224 people considered environmental defenders, including 12 murders.

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