

Dear President Juan Orlando Hernández,

We, a group of 50+ international organisations, write to express our shock and concern over the recent killing of Berta Cáceres, environmental activist and head of the indigenous rights group COPINH.

As you will know, Mrs Cáceres was shot dead by gunmen in the late hours of 2 March 2016. Over the years she had received multiple death threats and attempted kidnappings because of her work defending indigenous Lenca land against the Agua Zarca dam project in Río Blanco.<sup>1</sup> These threats had escalated in recent weeks since construction of the dam had restarted.

We demand an independent international investigation into the circumstances around Mrs Cáceres' death, and guaranteed protection for her family and colleagues. Mrs Cáceres was granted emergency protection measures by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights because of her acute vulnerability, but she claimed the Honduran state did not fully implement them.

We also demand [urgent action](#) to protect Gustavo Castro Soto, a Mexican activist who witnessed her assassination, and to ensure his safe passage back to Mexico.

Mrs Cáceres' case is the most high-profile killing within a growing trend in the murder, violence and intimidation of people defending their indigenous land rights in Honduras. Honduras is the world's most dangerous country per capita to be an environmental or land defender, with at least 109 people killed between 2010 and 2015.

Mrs Cáceres' case has not escaped international attention. In a [statement issued](#) in response to her death U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy called on you to find and punish those responsible for "this despicable crime." Last year, US Senator Barbara Boxer [wrote a letter to](#) US Secretary of State John Kerry urging for better protection of environmental defenders in Honduras. This was in direct response to Mrs Cáceres winning the 2015 Goldman Environment Prize – a prestigious award recognizing grassroots environmental activists from around the world. News of her death has generated substantial international media attention.

The 50+ international organisations listed below call on the Honduran state to ensure indigenous peoples' right to their land is respected and that they are able to carry out their legitimate work without fear for their safety.

Yours faithfully,

Goldman Environmental Prize  
Front Line Defenders  
Global Witness  
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre  
Bank Information Center  
Amazon Watch  
AIDA (Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente)  
Oakland Institute (USA)  
Environmental Investigation Agency US (EIA US)  
Greenpeace International

Greenpeace USA  
Greenpeace Aotearoa New Zealand:  
Greenpeace in Central & Eastern Europe  
Greenpeace International  
Greenpeace Greece  
Greenpeace in Central & Eastern Europe  
EarthRights International  
Global Green Grants Fund  
International Service for Human Rights  
War on Want  
Friends of the Earth International  
Friends of the Earth US  
Peace Brigades International  
EcoWaste Coalition  
Right Livelihood Award Foundation  
Jenifer Altman Foundation  
Earthjustice  
Rainforest Action Network  
International Rivers  
CESTA/Friends of the Earth El Salvador and Goldman Prize winner  
National Toxics Network Inc.  
Secrétaire Général Alternatives Durables pour le Développement  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Lynn Henning, Socially Responsible Agriculture Project, 2010 Goldman winner  
The Story of Stuff Project  
Greenpeace Australia Pacific  
Pesticide Action Network Aotearoa New Zealand  
Red de Acción en Plaguicidas y Alternativas en México (RAPAM)  
CEO - ESTAMOS  
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance  
Jan Chetana  
People and Water Slovakia  
Fern  
BaliFokus Foundation  
Armenian Women For Health And Healthy Environment (AWHHE)  
Greenpeace Switzerland  
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition Huntington (OVEC)  
Rettet den Regenwald (Rainforest Rescue)  
Salva la Selva  
Jorge Varela Marque, Goldman Prize Winner 1999  
Coalition against Land Grabbing – Philippines:  
Central America Women’s Network  
Common Frontiers Canada  
Urgewald  
GreenWood  
Loire Vivante  
Eco-Accord Centre



David Gordon, Executive Director, the Goldman Environmental Prize



**global witness**

Patrick Alley, Founding Director, Global Witness



Ole von Uexkull, Executive Director, Right Livelihood Award Foundation



Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Front Line Defenders



Jenifer Altman Foundation: Shorey Myers, Program Director.

Astrid Puentes and Anna Cederstav, Co-executive directors AIDA (Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente)

Anna Cederstav, AIDA and Earthjustice



*Peter Bosshard*

Peter Bosshard Interim Executive Director International Rivers



Katy Neusteter Director of Communications, Global Greengrants Fund



*Leila S. Salazar*

Leila Salazar-López, Executive Director, Amazon Watch



*Katie Redford*

Katie Redford, Director, EarthRights International



Chad Dobson, Executive Director, Bank Information Center (BIC)



*Anuradha Mittal*

Anuradha Mittal, Executive Director, Oakland Institute, USA



Kate Horner, Director of Forest Campaigns, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)



FIDH and OMCT as the Observatory for Protection for Human Rights Defenders

Ricardo Navarro, President of CESTA/Friends of the Earth El Salvador and 1995 Goldman Prize Recipient for South and Central America



Lindsey Allen, Executive Director, Rainforest Action Network



Dr Mariann Lloyd-Smith, Senior Advisor, National Toxics Network Inc.



Stanislas BINELI Secrétaire Général Alternatives Durables pour le Développement

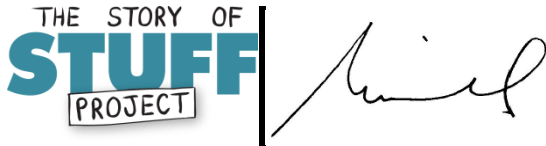


*Pamela K. Miller*

Pamela Miller, Executive Director, Alaska Community Action on Toxics



Lynn Henning, Socially Responsible Agriculture Project, 2010 Goldman Prize Recipient for North America



Michael O'Heaney, Director, The Story of Stuff Project

**GREENPEACE**

Von Hernandez, Global Development Director, Greenpeace International

**GREENPEACE** *Annie Leonard*

Annie Leonard, Executive Director, Greenpeace USA

**GREENPEACE**

David Ritter, Chief Executive Officer, Greenpeace Australia Pacific

**GREENPEACE** *R. Norman*

Russel Norman, Executive Director, Greenpeace Aotearoa New Zealand

**GREENPEACE** *Nikos Charalambides*

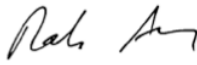
Nikos Charalambides, Executive Director, Greenpeace Greece

**GREENPEACE**

Peace Brigades International

Alexander Egit, Executive Director, Greenpeace in Central & Eastern Europe



  
Markus Allemann  
Co Executive Director

  
Verena Mühlberger  
Co Executive Director

Markus Allemann and Verena Mühlberger, Co Executive Directors, Greenpeace Switzerland



**Friends of  
the Earth  
International**

Erick Burke, International Membership Development Coordinator, Friends of the Earth International



**Friends of  
the Earth**

Jeff Conant, Senior International Forests Campaigner, Friends of the Earth US



John Hilary, Executive Director, War on Want

International Service for Human Rights



Dr Meriel Watts, Co-ordinator, Pesticide Action Network, Aotearoa New Zealand

**EcoWaste Coalition**

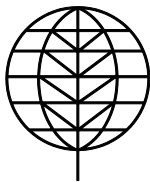


Ms. Aileen Lucero, Coordinator, EcoWaste Coalition, Philippines



**Business & Human Rights  
Resource Centre**

Phil Bloomer Executive Director, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre



**EARTHWORKS**



Jennifer Krill, Executive Director, EarthWorks

Fernando Bejarano G, Red de Acción en Plaguicidas y Alternativas en México (RAPAM)

**estamos**  
Organização comunitária



Juntos na luta  
contra a pobreza

Feliciano dos Santos, CEO, ESTAMOS



Desmond D'Sa, 2014 Goldman Prize Recipient for Africa, South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA), South Africa



Ramesh Agrawal, Director, Jan Chetana and 2010 Goldman Prize Recipient for Asia



Michal Kravčík, People and Water Slovakia



Saskia Ozinga, Campaigns Coordinator, Fern, UK

# BALIFOKUS

Yuyun Ismawati, Co-founder and Senior Advisor of BaliFokus Foundation and 2009 Goldman Prize Recipient for Islands and Island Nations



Dr Elena Manvelyan, President, Armenian Women For Health And Healthy Environment (AWHHE)



[www.ohvec.org](http://www.ohvec.org)

Janet Keating, Executive Director, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC), USA



Reinhard Behrend, Executive Director, Rettet den Regenwald, Germany



Guadalupe Rodríguez, Salva la Selva, Spain

Jorge Varela Marquez, 1999 Goldman Prize Recipient for South and Central America and Special Invitee of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples



Motalib Kemil, President, Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG), Philippines



Margarita Rebolledo Hernandez, Coordinator, Central America Women's Network (CAWN)



Common Frontiers Canada



Heffa Schuecking, Director, Urgewald and 1994 Goldman Prize Recipient for Europe

Scott Landis, President and Founder, GreenWood



Christine Jean, Coordinator, Loire Vivante and 1992 Goldman Prize Recipient for Europe



Eco-Accord Centre, Russia

---

<sup>i</sup> COPINH press releases (20 February 2016), Urgent Alert. Available from:  
<http://www.copinh.org/article/alerta-urgente-20-febrero/> and <http://www.copinh.org/article/copinh-denuncia-urgente-25-de-febrero-del-2016/>