

URGENT ACTION

TWO CAMPESINO LEADERS SHOT DEAD

On 18 October, José Ángel Flores and Silmer Dionisio George of the Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán were murdered. Both human rights defenders were shot dead after attending a meeting with several campesino (peasant farmer) people in La Confianza settlement, Bajo Aguán region, north-eastern Honduras.

In the afternoon of 18 October, unidentified armed men shot at **José Ángel Flores**, the president of the **Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán, MUCA)**, and **Silmer Dionisio George**, a member of the same movement, multiple times as they left a meeting with several campesino people in La Confianza settlement. José Ángel Flores died immediately. Campesino activists took Silmer Dionisio George to the hospital, where he died as a result of the gunshots. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) granted precautionary measures to both human rights defenders in 2014, along with another 121 leaders of the campesino movements in the region. The IACHR requested that Honduras take appropriate measures in order to protect their lives and personal integrity, given the high risk they were facing.

A campesino leader of the Agrarian and Regional Platform of the Aguán Valley (Plataforma Agraria Regional del Valle del Aguán) also covered by precautionary measures told Amnesty International that José Ángel Flores had constantly received threatening calls in the past year. Earlier this year Silmer Dionisio George had to leave the Bajo Aguán region because of repeated threats against him. The Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras, COFADEH) confirmed that both leaders faced constant threats because of their work as human rights defenders.

According to the Coordinating Committee of Popular Organizations of the Aguán (Coordinadora de Organizaciones Populares del Aguan, COPA) there have now been 116 murdered campesino leaders in the Bajo Aguán region since 2010.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to take prompt, appropriate and effective measures to protect the lives and personal integrity of all the campesino human rights defenders covered by the IACHR precautionary measures 50/14 - Campesino Leaders of Bajo Aguán, Honduras;
- Calling on them to initiate a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into the murders of José Ángel Flores and Silmer Dionisio George, to identify both the material and intellectual perpetrators and bring those to justice;
- Calling on them to protect MUCA members as well as other campesino movements in accordance with their specific needs and adopted and implemented in consultation with them.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 NOVEMBER 2016 TO:

President
 Juan Orlando Hernández
 Presidente de la República
 Casa Presidencial Bulevar Juan Pablo II
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
 Email: karlacueva144@gmail.com
 Twitter: @JuanOrlandoH
Salutation: Dear President/ Estimado Señor Presidente

Attorney General
 Óscar Fernando Chinchilla
 Fiscal General de la República
 Ministerio Público
 Lomas del Guijarro
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
 Email: fiscalgeneral@hushamail.com
 Twitter: @MP_Honduras
Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado Señor Fiscal

And copies to:
Comisionado Nacional de Derechos Humanos
 Roberto Herrera Cáceres, CONADEH
 Oficina Central, Colonia Florencia Norte,
 Boulevard Suyapa, Tegucigalpa,
 Honduras
 Email: y.hernandez@conadeh.hn / sofia.caceres@conadeh.hn
 Twitter: @conadeh

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Attacks and threats against campesinos in Bajo Aguán, in the Department of Colón, intensified in 2009. The campesinos are working on issues of access to land in an area that is increasingly militarized and surrounded by miles of African palm plantations. Campesino communities have reported that there is a clandestine cemetery in the community of Panamá where they believe members of the movement have been buried. They have also been the victims of evictions in which excessive force was used. There are numerous investigations and legal proceedings against campesinos accused of land usurpation.

According to COFADEH, between 2010 and 2016, around 700 campesinos from the region were the subjects of legal proceedings. In the past year they have been the victims of six attacks, three kidnappings, 16 cases of permanent surveillance, five cases of infiltration of the movement and eight cases of harassment.

In its last report on Honduras, the IACHR recommended that the Honduran authorities strengthen the Violent Deaths Unit of Bajo Aguán, as well as establish a roundtable with campesino representatives from different organizations in the area. The Commission also urged the authorities to strengthen efforts into the investigation of violent events that have occurred in the region and to punish both the material and intellectual authors of these incidents, in particular clarifying responsibility in case of possible involvement of state forces.

For more information on the situation of human rights defenders and defenders of land, territory and environmental rights defenders in Honduras, see the reports *'We are defending the land with our blood': Defenders of the land, territory and environment in Honduras and Guatemala* (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr01/4562/2016/en/>) and *Defending human rights in the Americas: Necessary, legitimate and dangerous* (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr01/0003/2014/en/>).

Name: José Ángel Flores (m), Silmer Dionisio George (m) and other members of the Unified Campesino Movement of the Aguán (Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán, MUCA)

Gender m/f: all

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