



# ALTO A LA POLÍTICA DE EXTERMINIO CONTRA EL PUEBLO GARÍFUNA

*¡Cumplimiento de las sentencias de la Corte IDH, ya!*

On July 18th, 2020 around 5am, a contingent of approximately 30 Honduran detectives detained Albert Snaider Centeno Thomas, president of the Communal Council of the Garífuna community of Triunfo de la Cruz and, along with him the young men Milton Joel Martínez Álvarez, Suami Aparicio Mejía García and Gerardo Misael Trochez Cáliz. They are all active members of the struggle to defend the land in a community that has been divided by third party actors seeking to appropriate the ancestral Garífuna territory amidst the acquiescence of the Honduran state.

Three years after their disappearance, their whereabouts are still unknown and there has been no progress towards holding those responsible accountable. The State has not met the demand to carry out an investigation with due diligence through a Special Prosecutor on Disappearances that incorporates the findings of the Comité de Investigación y Búsqueda de los Desaparecidos de Triunfo de la Cruz (Committee for the Investigation and Search for the Disappeared from Triunfo de la Cruz), a demand backed by dozens of national and international organizations.

In that regard, the Inter-American Court for Human Rights (IACHR) itself, the highest court of the Americas, has asked the State to adopt all measures necessary to find these

brothers as well as to effectively protect the right to life and personal integrity for the communities of Triunfo de la Cruz and Punta Piedra.

This has taken place under the framework set forth in two favorable rulings the court issued in 2015 recognizing the systematic violation of the Garífuna people's human rights. None of the measures ordered by the court in these cases have been implemented. On the contrary, the State has opted to make evident its policies of racism, patriarchy and territorial plunder that produce a true exodus of the community's population towards other territories around the country and outside of its national borders. This governmental posture of turning its back on the crisis that is playing out in the communities - caused by predatory extractivism - amounts to a potent policy of extermination, one which Miriam Miranda calls the "emptying out" of the territories.

Since the disappearance of the four young men, the situation of the Garífuna people continues to be extremely grave. Illegal detentions, assassinations, criminalization, displacement, burning down of ancestral healing centers, harassment and threats and other forms of violence have particularly impacted women and the female leadership of OFRANEH.



The Garífuna communities have always lived wisely in peace and harmony with all expressions of nature through their ancient knowledge and respect for the cycles and dynamics of animal and vegetative life. In this way, they have preserved valuable resources for the survival of humanity, resources that now face plunder.

The Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en Honduras (National Network of Women Defending Human Rights in Honduras) joins OFRANEH and the Garífuna communities that make it up in their struggle. The organization is a member of our Assembly of Members and for that reason its struggles are also ours.

In the Network's system for registering and documenting aggressions, we have counted at least 720 attacks. The systematic and intentional violence is expressed in vile acts including assassinations of women and men who have been pillars of the organization and of the territorial defense.

These acts have shadowed collective processes in tremendous grief. OFRANEH faces all possible types of aggression, especially harassment, surveillance and threats, actions faced extensively by the daughters and sons of human rights defenders with whom the general state of tension is severe. It must be said that the campaigns of disparagement, particularly towards its national leaders, constitute a daily constant.

OFRANEH, despite all of this, does not stop fighting for and advancing its ideas and visions for the world. Since the first year of the pandemic, the organization has even more vigorously proposed the recuperation and strengthening of both its territories and its spirituality and ancestral knowledge, understanding that the current crisis is one of civilization. Although the proposals are fundamentally about its own people, they also invite all of us to think and act towards viable, autonomous and collective solutions in a country under siege by hopelessness and extreme violence.

**¡Vivos se los llevaron, Vivos los queremos!**

