

International
Organization for
Self-Determination
and Equality (IOSDE)

www.iosde.org
info@iosde.org

**IOSDE Statement on the murder of Berta Cáceres:
STOP VIOLATING AND KILLING OUR SISTERS**

7 March 2016

Unlike the illegal (by International Law) criminalization of Indigenous Human Rights Defender Berta Cáceres by the Honduras State, the murder of Cáceres has not gone unnoticed by the international community at-large. When will women no longer be the targets of the violence, domination and backlash of the models of dominance-style patriarchy, of State/governance and business? WHEN IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH?

In 2013 IOSDE's Founder and Director, India Reed Bowers, personally delivered an IOSDE statement to the Honduras Embassy in San Francisco, California USA, that demanded an end to the judicial persecution of COPINH members Berta Cáceres, Aureliano Molina and Tomas Gómez and that Cáceres, Molina, and Gómez be exonerated of false accusations against them. IOSDE demanded that the Honduran government must respect ILO Convention 169 and respect ancestral lands and that illegal concession on the Gualcarque River must be withdrawn and construction of the dam stopped, that attacks against indigenous peoples, especially in Rio Blanco, must be ended. At the same time of that criminalizing Cáceres in 2013, the Honduran delegation at the United Nations (UN) 24th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) stated, in-session during an Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), that States should consult widely with Indigenous Peoples so as to have a comprehensive process before making a decision on extractive industry.

States make a mockery of Human Rights when they present one position to EMRIP, the HRC, a Special Rapporteur or otherwise in the international arena and at the same time operate differently, ie hypocritically, at home. The abusive relationship States model therein results in murders of Human Rights Defenders, and teaches the people themselves to harm each other as a model of State loyalty/citizenship. IOSDE sees the murder of Berta Cáceres as a deliberate fear-tactic and attempt to silence Human Rights-based discourse and enacting of Indigenous Rights. Such tactics are a played-out form of genocidal operatives used to maintain both State domestic and international business control for profit, violating our sisters' right to life, peace, wisdom, dignity and knowledge. Were States not to criminalize Human Rights Defenders, women and men with true commitment to a better world for all, like Berta Cáceres, would be alive today and celebrated for being the role models they are *in life not death*. **Women and men like Berta Cáceres are our heroes; now is the time to stop violating and murdering heroes and start modeling their support, for a better world.**¹

¹ See attached: [2013 IOSDE Statement re the Honduras State's Criminalization of Berta Cáceres](#); and excerpt from *IOSDE Statement on the Murder of Teduray chieftain 'meant to silence lumad struggle for rights'*; Mindanao, Philippines, 9 October 2015

IOSDE: an equal future starts with an equal now

2013 IOSDE Statement re the Honduras State's Criminalization of Berta Cáceres²
hand-delivered to the Embassy of Honduras in San Francisco, California USA
on 19 September 2013

19 September 2013
Consulate of Honduras
San Francisco, CA

President of Honduras Porfirio Lobo

Judge Reyes Lissien Knight Lisseth
First Court of Letters of Intibucá

Exonerate Berta Cáceres, Aureliano Molina and Tomas Gómez; Uphold ILO 169 and Indigenous Rights in Honduras

IOSDE demands an end to the judicial persecution of COPINH members Berta Cáceres, Aureliano Molina and Tomas Gómez. Berta, Aureliano, and Tomas must be exonerated of the false accusations against them. The Honduran government must respect ILO Convention 169, and respect ancestral lands. The illegal concession on the Gualcarque River must be withdrawn, and construction of the dam stopped. The Honduran government must end attacks against indigenous peoples, especially in Rio Blanco. No new police station should be located in or near Rio Blanco, which would add fuel to the repression.

Just this week the Honduran delegation at the United Nations 24th session of the Human Rights Council stated in-session during an Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) that States should consult widely with Indigenous Peoples so as to have a comprehensive process before making a decision on extractive industry. The Honduran delegation stressed its new national policy therein and the Honduran mining law. IOSDE expects the Honduran Government and leadership to apply and implement standards respecting, protecting and promoting Indigenous Rights in regards to all industries, land use and development, including the illegal concession on the Gualcarque River and dam construction.

Also this week at the United Nations Human Rights Council 24th Session an event concerning Human Rights Defenders was held. IOSDE finds it shameful that the Honduran Government and judicial system allows for false claims against Indigenous Human Rights Defenders, which only promotes a further repression of those standing up for the very rights the Honduran Government claims to uphold.

² Original on letterhead as-delivered at <https://www.scribd.com/doc/169501219/IOSDE-Statement-to-Honduras-19-September-2013>

Excerpt from *IOSDE Statement on the Murder of Teduray chieftain 'meant to silence lumad struggle for rights'; Mindanao, Philippines, 9 October 2015*³

IOSDE strongly condemns all violence, intimidation, and other acts of human rights violations against Human Rights Defenders, and in particular those living and breathing the front lines for Indigenous Rights and especially in that context traditional healing, leadership, women's roles as revered and sacred, peaceful leadership, traditional territories, and self-determination including true sovereignty, separation from external powers and/or autonomy. Tragically, such violence against Human Rights Defenders is both historic and current with no respite; it is a norm for those defending Indigenous Rights and/or equality. Moreover, it is especially so for those defending rights that whilst confronting States, persons in power, business and authorities directly concerning laws, policies, and actions that are in deepest violation of the fundamental human rights, including true and actualized Indigenous self-determination, traditional leadership, traditional religion and sacred places and lifeways and territorial rights therein.

IOSDE has recognized from its inception that strategic killing of Indigenous Human Rights Defenders as well as their allies, and in particular or persons with deep meaning to their representative collectives for being true, faithful, kind-hearted and genuine in their positions and relations, is a strategic intimidation tactic on the part of the offenders or contractors. We also know that such intimidation tactics will never work as the offender/contractor intends; such tactics only strengthen the commitment of us all - globally, regionally and locally - to persevere all the more in support of the very rights and change those murdered, maimed and otherwise reduced and violated stood and stand for. In fact, IOSDE's very purpose is, in part, to collectively overturn the horrors created by those powers that be that meet human rights equality in action with violence. There are no reasons other than power and greed for violence to meet Human Rights Defenders. In fact, human rights, and Indigenous Rights therein, as well as Women's Rights and others rights, are to be engaged by brilliant minds, spirits and hearts of the world so to create safe and peaceful change for human rights progress.

It is with the attention and empathy of the international communities in the world that these actions will be reviewed and treated as the true genocidal acts that they are. When the citizens of the world come to realize that the very concept of citizenship that they may take for granted is actually a concept of statehood built on the backs of slaves, Indigenous Peoples, women, and desecration of the equality of all peoples and religions, the world will begin to mediate for a more peaceful state of life for all humans, as the collective that we truly are, without such horrors as the murder of Lencio Arig, the Lumads and Human Rights Defenders.

³http://iosde.org/uploads/3/2/5/4/3254609/iosde_statement_on_the_murder_of_teduray_chieftain_meant_to_silence_lumad_struggle_for_rights_mindanao_philippines_9_october_2015.pdf; and <http://iosde.org/3/post/2015/10/iosde-statement-re-murder-of-teduray-chieftain-meant-to-silence-lumad-struggle-for-rights-mindanao-philippines.html>

IOSDE: an equal future starts with an equal now