

Montreal, August 31, 2023



**STAND FOR
THE LAND**

River Guapinol dried up in April 2023.

Photo: ERIC-Radio Progreso

Dear supporter,

We hope this letter finds you well, energized by a great summer and ready to mobilize with us!

We are really looking forward to the next phase of our Lenten campaign, **Create Hope – Stand for the Land**. This time, we will meet Honduran communities whose water and land are threatened by an open-pit iron mine. Operating on a dubious permit in *Montaña de Botaderos Carlos Escaleras National Park*, the mine affects villages along the Guapinol and San Pedro rivers and the entire regional ecosystem.

Since 2018, environment and human rights defenders have courageously spoken up to denounce the mining project, which is poisoning the waters on which their livelihoods depend. Their peaceful mobilization has not been without setbacks. Some of them, now famed as the Guapinol Eight, were unfairly detained for 914 days. Three defenders have even been murdered since January 2023!

We are therefore asking you to act in solidarity with these communities. Please sign our letter to the Honduran ambassador to Canada, which presses the Honduran government to:

- Bring the killers of the martyred defenders to justice.
- Recompense the Guapinol Eight and their families.
- Close the mine and restore the national park.
- Heed and more effectively protect the country's environmental and human rights defenders.

We have created several resources to help you spread this message in your community. Discover them at devp.org/campaign/resources. They include the following printed items that will be available through your animator:

- Poster (12" x 18")
- Action sheet (8.5" x 11" folded in two)

Here are the **resources available online**:

- Letter to the Honduran ambassador for collecting signatures on (copy attached)
- Backgrounder (a four-page leaflet on the Guapinol case)
- Short talk (for introducing the campaign)
- Parish bulletin announcements
- Promotional banners
- Videos



Join us at
1:30 p.m. ET on Saturday, September 16

for a national launch webinar with **Elvin Hernández**, human rights investigator for ERIC-Radio Progreso, and **Juana Zúniga**, defender of Guapinol and member of the Committee for the Defence of the Common and Public Goods of Tocoa, Colón.

Register at devp.org/events.

Do mark these key campaign dates:

September 1, 2023	Campaign launch on our website
September 16, 2023	National launch webinar with partners
September-October, 2023	Animators conduct training workshops across Canada. Find your local workshop at devp.org/events .
October 13 to 24, 2023	Solidarity visit by Elvin Hernández , a representative of our Honduran partner ERIC-Radio Progreso, to Montreal, the Outaouais region, Ottawa and Toronto
February 25, 2024	Deadline for collecting signatures* on the letter to the ambassador (being the second anniversary of the release of the Guapinol defenders from prison)
April 17, 2024 <i>International day of Peasant Struggles</i>	Desired date for meeting with the Honduran ambassador to Canada to hand over signed copies of the letter. The delegation will include members and staff of Development and Peace — Caritas Canada.



* Please send all signed letters to our new address:
555 René-Lévesque Blvd. West, 8th Floor, Montreal, Quebec H2Z 1B1.

We are looking forward to seeing you again; to giving this cornered but courageous Honduran community a hand; and to continuing to work together to **create hope**. Let's **stand for the land**. Let's stand with people who are defending their resources, water and territory for the common good of humanity. Together, let's build a world of justice and peace.

Thank you for your continual commitment.

Yours in solidarity,



Carl Héту

Executive Director

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada