

# URGENT ACTION

## WITNESS TO DEFENDER'S MURDER AT RISK

**Honduran authorities are refusing to allow Mexican human rights defender Gustavo Castro Soto, sole witness to the murder of Indigenous leader Berta Cáceres, to leave Honduras and are seeking to have him return to the state where the crime was committed. He has already provided testimony and fears for his safety in Honduras.**

Honduran authorities intercepted **Gustavo Castro Soto** at the airport in Tegucigalpa, the capital, early in the morning of 6 March, as he attempted to board a flight to Mexico and refused to let him leave the country. The Attorney General's office issued an order requiring him to stay in the country to continue giving testimony about the murder of Berta Cáceres, leader and co-founder of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (COPINH), who was shot dead in her home early the morning of 3 March in La Esperanza, Intibucá department, west Honduras

Gustavo Castro's organization, the Mexican NGO Otros Mundos AC/Chiapas – Amigos de la Tierra México said in a press release that he is currently being held at the Mexican embassy in Tegucigalpa. Gustavo Castro fears that the authorities are seeking to return him to Intibucá department one day after authorities told him he was free to leave and he left to travel to Tegucigalpa.

Gustavo Castro has asked the authorities for copies of his declarations, but they have denied this petition and have not provided him with information about the investigation according to Otros Mundos. Otros Mundos said they fear that his rights to due process are being violated and that his safety is in danger if he is returned to Intibucá.

Gustavo Castro Soto was present and injured in the attack that killed Indigenous leader and human rights defender Berta Cáceres on 3 March. She had received threats for years in connection to her work defending the rights of Indigenous communities and the environment. Most recently Berta Cáceres and COPINH had denounced threats and harassment in connection to their protests against the construction of the Agua Zarca dam in the community of Río Blanco.

### **Please write immediately in English, Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling on authorities to abstain from returning Gustavo Castro Soto to Intibucá department and to allow him to return to Mexico as soon as possible;
- Urging authorities to respect his rights to due process and consular protection.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 APRIL 2016 TO:**

#### President

Juan Orlando Hernández  
 Presidente de la República  
 Casa Presidencial  
 Bulevar Juan Pablo II  
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
 Email: info@presidencia.gob.hn

**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@hushmail.com  
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado Señor Fiscal**

#### **And copies to:**

CONADEH  
 Colonia Florencia Norte  
 Boulevard Suyapa  
 Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
 Email: central@conadeh.hn

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** HIS EXCELLENCY MR IVAN ROMERO-MARTINEZ, Embassy of Honduras, 4th Floor 136 Baker Street W1U 6UD, 020 7486 4880, Fax 020 7486 4550, hondurasuk@lineone.net

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

Name: Gustavo Castro Soto

Gender m/f: m

UA: 50/16 Index: AMR 37/3588/2016 Issue Date: 6 March 2016

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

