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HONDURAS

JUSTICE FOR MURDERED WATER DEFENDER, JUAN LÓPEZ

Juan López, a respected environmental and community leader, was murdered on September 14, 2024, in Tocoa, Honduras. While three suspects are in custody, those who ordered the killing remain unpunished. One month after his murder, a court upheld a decision that had previously cleared Juan and four fellow defenders of baseless charges related to their peaceful opposition to a mining project. Public pressure helped strengthen accountability in the case, but justice remains incomplete. We will continue to track the investigation, support Juan's loved ones and colleagues, and speak out for the protection of water defenders in Honduras.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

On September 14, 2024, Juan López was shot and killed in his car shortly after leading a religious service in Tocoa, Honduras. Authorities have charged the suspected gunman and two accomplices, who are now awaiting trial. However, those behind the crime—the intellectual authors—have not been brought to justice. Despite national and international outcry, Honduran authorities have yet to fully investigate or prosecute everyone responsible. Juan was a member of the Municipal Committee for the Defence of Common and Public Goods (CMDBCP), a grassroots group opposing destructive mining practices. We continue to call on the Honduran government to ensure justice for Juan, protect his family, and guarantee the safety of CMDBCP members and their legal team.

One month after Juan's murder, a local court dismissed appeals that aimed to reopen a criminal case against him and four other environmental defenders. The original charges had been declared unfounded by the Supreme Court in 2023, which recognized their peaceful efforts to challenge a mining project in Carlos Escaleras National Park. The court's decision was a victory for human rights, but the attempt to revive the charges shows ongoing judicial harassment of defenders. Thanks to public campaigning, the case has drawn broader scrutiny. We will keep watching the legal process, advocating for accountability, and sharing ways you can support defenders at risk.