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Federica Mogherini

High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, 7 November 2018

Dear Federica,

I would like to bring to your attention the judicial process regarding the murder of Berta Cáceres and attempt against the life of Mexican environmentalist Gustavo Castro, in Honduras.

Berta Cáceres was murdered on 2 March 2016, and more than two and a half years later, no one has been convicted of the assassination. Eight people have been charged as material actors of her murder, of which David Castillo, manager of the company Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA), alleged mastermind of the murder.

In fact, Ms Cáceres was killed during a time when she was campaigning against a massive hydroelectric dam project, conducted by DESA. It is therefore believed that this was a political murder, also aiming at weakening Ms Cáceres' NGO, the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). Gustavo Castro was wounded on that attack and survived pretending to be dead.

Now, there are serious doubts about the seriousness of the judicial process: there has been a lack of due diligence in the investigations, and serious violations of due process such as denial of access to evidence to the family, which the Public Ministry has recognised not having analysed the majority; rejection of COPINH as a victim; limitation of the publicity of the process; and rejection of the key evidence that would prove the existence of a criminal structure.

Moreover, the lawyers representing the Cáceres family tried to have the judges recused and replaced, accusing them of bias and abuse of authority. Those judges then claimed those same lawyers had abandoned the trial and that the victims would be represented by the public prosecution.

Ana Gomes

European Parliament

Bât. Altiero Spinelli, 14G201, rue Wiertz 60, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium

Tel. : +32 (0)2 284 58 24 Fax : +32 (0)2 284 98 24

anamaria.gomes@ep.europa.eu



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I therefore urge you to take up this matter with the Honduran authorities in order to certify that the case is conducted in a truly legal way, and suggest you assign someone at the EU Delegation in Honduras to follow-up on this case closely.

Best regards,
Ana Gomes

Ana Gomes
Member of the European Parliament

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European Parliament
Bât. Altiero Spinelli, 14G201, rue Wiertz 60, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium
Tel. : +32 (0)2 284 58 24 Fax : +32 (0)2 284 98 24
anamaria.gomes@ep.europa.eu