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President Juan Orlando Hernández  
Casa Presidencial Bulevar Juan Pablo II  
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March 4, 2016

Mr. President,

The American Indian Studies Center at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) expresses its condemnation of the murder of Lenca activist Berta Cáceres. The targeting and killing of indigenous activists is deplorable in any situation. It is especially egregious in this case, as the work of Ms. Cáceres was highly valued in the international community, as well as in Honduras. Ms. Cáceres' murder is a high-profile case, but we are aware that hundreds of other indigenous activists have been subject to murder, violence and intimidation because they are defending their rights in Honduras. We assure you that the international community is not fooled by the absurd claim that Ms. Cáceres' death was the result of a robbery, following as it did upon dozens of threats to her life. Your government was obligated by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to take precautionary measures to ensure the protection and safety of Ms. Cáceres. Even in the best reading of this terrible situation, you and your government have failed utterly in this regard. This is intolerable and extremely damaging to the legitimacy of the government of Honduras in the eyes of the world.

We call on the government of Honduras to carry out a transparent and effective investigation into this crime and bring to justice the persons and entities responsible for killing Ms. Cáceres. In addition, we hold the government of Honduras responsible for ensure the safety of witnesses to this crime. In particular, we will be following closely the treatment of Mr. Gustavo Castro Soto of Otros Mundos Chiapas/Friends of the Earth-Mexico, a Mexican citizen who was shot and left for dead in the attack. Mr. Castro should be allowed to leave Honduras, as soon as he is physically able, to return safely to Mexico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Shannon Speed". The signature is fluid and somewhat abstract, with several loops and overlapping lines.

Dr. Shannon Speed  
Director  
UCLA American Indian Studies Center