



Latvijas Ūdens transporta arodbiedrību federācija Water Transport Unions' Federation of Latvia

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President of the Republic of Honduras
Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado
Honduras
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27.03.2014

Dear President Hernández,

I am writing to you as a member union of the International Transport Workers Federation, ITF. The ITF brings together over four million transport workers from countries worldwide who are extremely concerned at the serious human and trade union rights situation that has arisen in Puerto Cortés.

The ITF has been following these developments and has reported them to its members. I understand that both the Honduran authorities and the concession operator Operadora Portuaria Centroamericana (OPC), which belongs to the international ICTSI group, appear to be involved in a campaign of victimisation and intimidation against the ITF-affiliated union, the Sindicato Gremial de Trabajadores del Muelle (SGTM). SGTM is a valued and respected member of the ITF family, which operates legitimately in defence of the livelihoods of its members.

My union has been shocked at the category of events that has taken place since September. Death threats have been made against union leaders and their families. The union general secretary's father has been killed. Union members have been summarily dismissed and charges of terrorism have been brought against them. Soldiers have been sent to the port to confront and arrest protesters. Most recently, attempts were made by police to detain and arrest workers who took part in a legal and peaceful protest with other union colleagues in the United States. These actions clearly contravene the most basic principles of human and workers' rights, which are protected both by national and by international law.

Mr President, I call on you on behalf of 1500 Latvian dockers, members of UTAF (Latvijas Ūdens transporta arodbiedrību federācija) to guarantee the safety of Victor Crespo, his family and unionists who are making a stand for trade union rights and freedoms in Puerto Cortés and to personally intervene with OPC, the Honduran ICSTI group company to ensure that talks with SGTM for a collective agreement commence. I also request that you initiate an immediate investigation into the role of the national police in this extremely *serious matter*.

I would be grateful to hear your comments on this serious matter.

Yours sincerely,

UTAF president
A.Holodnuks