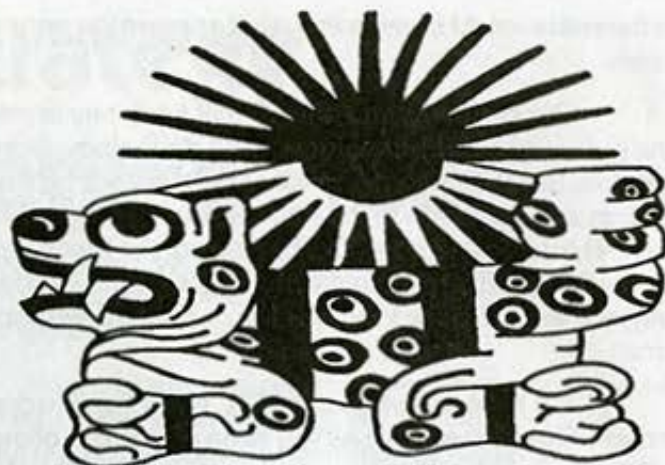


ASSASSINATION OF INDIAN LEADERS IN HONDURAS



(Honduras) Vicente Matute and his colleague Francisco Guevara were killed September 30. They were both leaders of the Xicaque people and Vicente Matute was president of the Federation of the Xicaque Tribe (FETRIXI), the president of the Honduran Advisory Council for the Development of Autochthonous Ethnic People (CAHDEA), and the general coordinator of the Commission for the Confederation of Ethnic People of Honduras. The tribe has been developing legal claims to the government and landowners who have been increasingly encroaching on Indian lands to cut timber. Lawsuits were successful in providing legal rulings and precedents for retention of indigenous control over their lands.

The news was received by the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Honduras (CODEH) and the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared People of Honduras (COFADEH).

On September 30, 1991, at about 5:00 AM in Plan Grande Village, in the Department of Yoro, the two leaders of the indigenous peoples of Tolupan (Xicaque) were executed while travelling in a truck. They were both "riddled with bullets when they decelerated in order to cross a narrow pass. The perpetrators were staked out nearby, in the shrubs of the pass."

The assassinations are evidently the result of declarations made by the two leaders at a press conference last September 18th, in which they drew attention to death threats by landowners Eugenio Chavez, Nando Murillo and the mayor of Dulce Nombre de Culmi, Silvio Marin Juarez, against 130 families of the Pech Tribe, located in the Municipality of Dulce Nombre of Culmi, Olancho Province. At this conference, Matute declared that the Xicaque Tribe of the Yoro department face similar problems, adding that one of FETRIXI's members, Marcelino Polance, was wounded by two men dressed in civilian clothing.

Source: AFSC

Please urge the Honduran Government:

- 1) To defend and guarantee the right to life of the inhabitants of Honduras, as provided for in the Inter American Convention on Human Rights,
- 2) To investigate and clarify these extrajudicial executions and to punish the parties found responsible.

Send your pleas to:

Rafael Callejas, Presidente de la Republica
Palacio Nacional, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Phone: 011-504-22-82087, Fax: 011-504-37-96-56.

First National Encounter of Indigenous People and Campesinos Held in El Salvador

(El Salvador) The First National Encounter of Indigenous People and Campesinos was held in Sonsonate on September 6-8, and organized by the National Association of Indigenous Peoples (ANIS), the Anthropological Center of El Salvador (CIADES), and the Ecumenical Ministry for Development and Peace (MEDEPAZ). The main themes were: appropriate technology, indigenous legislation, ecology and culture. Among the participants were international organizations, government representatives and the national press.

The goal of the meeting was to recuperate indigenous cultural values such as language, history and overall culture, in order to promote development on education, ecology and appropriate technologies which can apply to indigenous cultures as well as to the rest of the nation. This was an effort initiated by the indigenous peoples and the campesinos of El Salvador. Among the activities were the inauguration of an indigenous school, workshops on human rights, indigenous rights, and indigenous legislation, and appropriate technologies and natural resources.