

PRESS RELEASE

**International Delegation arrives in Honduras to
accompany the Camp for the Life of the Garífuna Peoples**

The international mission will be in Honduras from 17 to 19 September to accompany OFRANEH and the Garífuna communities, observe the situation of human rights defenders and express solidarity with the defense of collective rights.

Tegucigalpa, Honduras. September 2026. – The International Delegation in solidarity with the Camp for the Life of the Garífuna Peoples is currently in Honduras to express solidarity, observe and accompany the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras (OFRANEH), the Garífuna communities and the people of Honduras in their defense of their ancestral territories, collective rights, cultural identity, autonomy and communal ways of life.

The Delegation, made up of approximately 35 people from different countries and organizations, will remain in Honduras from 17 to 19 September. During these days, the Delegation will conduct actions of accompaniment, observation and solidarity, as well as participate in listening sessions with OFRANEH members and representatives from Garífuna communities, with the aim of gaining first-hand knowledge about the situation that these communities and defenders of territory are facing.

The international presence comes in the framework of the Camp for the Life of the Garífuna Peoples, set up in front of the Supreme Court of Justice as one of the actions organized by the communities to demand compliance with the Inter-American Human Rights Court rulings regarding Garífuna territories. The camp is sustained as a space for resistance, solidarity and joint coordination in response to the situation of territorial dispossession that communities are facing.

For the International Delegation, the Garífuna Peoples' struggle is the defense of a collective territory, a territory built and inhabited from ancestral memory, and where they can live with their culture, communal forms of organization, ties to the sea and the land, and the conditions necessary for their survival. To defend the community territory also means honoring the legacy of the ancestors and protecting the living conditions for all generations.



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The situation of Garífuna communities cannot be analyzed separate from the structural racism that has historically threatened their territories and violated their rights. This racism is also expressed in the stigmatizing narratives and hate campaigns spread through different media that present the Garífuna Peoples' demands as a threat, rendering invisible their history, their collective rights and the obligations of the Honduran State. For the International Delegation, it is crucial to counter these narratives, to listen to the voices of the communities themselves and recognize their capacity to organize, make decisions and defend their territories, taking care to not perpetuate colonial perspectives that minimize their struggles and the progress made regarding collective rights.

The Delegation expresses its solidarity with OFRANEH, the Garífuna Peoples and the people of Honduras, as well as with rights defenders who face criminalization for defending their territories and rights. In this regard, the situation of five human rights defenders from the community of San Juan, Tela – also members of OFRANEH – deserves special attention. They were detained during the violent and illegal eviction that took place on 6 July and were subsequently charged with the crime of “aggravated trespass.” International organizations have documented and expressed concern about this process.

In this context, the Delegation respects and acknowledges OFRANEH's decision not to attend the institutional meetings scheduled as part of this visit, following the decisions adopted by the organization and the communities themselves at a general assembly involving more than 35 Garífuna communities. The mission understands this decision as part of the Garífuna Peoples' right to self-determination, organization and participation in decisions that affect their communities and territories.

The Delegation notes with particular concern that incidents such as those that recently occurred in Cayos Cochinos as well as evictions in other communities cannot be viewed as isolated events. Members of this mission view what is happening in the Garífuna territories as part of a broader conflict over the development model, access to and control of territories, and guarantees for the peoples who inhabit and defend them. The Delegation believes it is necessary to examine these dynamics from a regional perspective, as the mechanisms of dispossession, criminalization and the erosion of guarantees for territorial defense can be replicated in various countries in Central America and throughout the region.

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The Delegation will also look into the concerns expressed by the Garífuna Peoples and by Honduran civil society organizations regarding recently passed legislation. In particular, Legislative Decree 107-2026, published on 26 June 2026, which establishes measures to protect and prioritize agro-industrial activities, energy projects, tourism, livestock farming and small-scale farmers. Among other provisions, it establishes mechanisms to protect certain lands and productive activities and mandates measures to ensure the movement of goods and products even during strikes, demonstrations and protests. However, since its passage, the law has been used to carry out evictions in various parts of the country. The Delegation believes it is necessary to analyze these provisions from a human rights and collective rights perspective, particularly when they violate territorial rights, community participation, the right to social protest and the Honduran State's international obligations.

Furthermore, the mission calls on the State of Honduras to ensure that human rights defenders who are members of OFRANEH, the Garífuna Peoples and the people of Honduras can carry out their work free from threats, persecution or criminalization, and that the authorities guarantee due process and respect for national and international human rights obligations. The case centers on the demand for protection and guarantees of the territorial rights of the Garífuna Peoples. Through decisions that are legally binding for the State of Honduras, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has recognized the territorial rights of the Garífuna communities of San Juan, Punta Piedra, Triunfo de la Cruz and Cayos Cochinos.

During their stay in Honduras, the International Delegation will carry out activities to support the Camp for the Life of the Garífuna Peoples, hold listening sessions with community representatives and meetings with various public and diplomatic bodies to convey the concerns shared by OFRANEH, Garífuna communities and Honduran society. The Delegation reaffirms that its presence is based on solidarity and the recognition that defending territory also means defending the lives, memories, culture, and future of peoples.



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It also expresses its solidarity with the Garífuna Peoples, OFRANEH and the people of Honduras, as well as with all persons and communities who defend their rights and territories against violence, racism, criminalization and any form of dispossession. The mission will continue documenting and observing the situation during their stay in the country, and will share their main conclusions at the end of the visit. To defend collective territory is to defend life, memory and the generations to come.

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