

“The COVID-19 pandemic is the best opportunity that multinationals and national companies could have hoped for to deepen the system of looting our countries’ resources.” (*Tocoa Municipal Committee for Defense of Natural and Public Commons, Honduras*)

From: MiningWatch Canada

NEW REPORT No Reprieve For life and territory: COVID-19 and resistance to the mining pandemic

A new report developed by the Coalition against the Mining Pandemic — Latin America unmasks the unbridled advance of mining during the pandemic, for which reason communities and peoples in Latin America could not let their guard down even while taking measures to protect themselves from COVID-19.\

The report (<https://miningwatch.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c89185f430617e4dc1a02762e&id=02c6577359&e=1186657b4b>) is based on case studies from nine Latin American countries — Mexico, Honduras, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Chile and Argentina. It examines how governments and mining companies have taken advantage of the lengthy COVID-19 pandemic to position aggressive mining expansion as "essential" for economic revival and energy transition. At the same time, it documents the responses and resilience of affected peoples under even more adverse conditions than before the pandemic, underscoring that mutual care, community organization, land, water and healthy food are what is truly essential.

The research highlights that the mining sector, especially metal mining, has experienced an economic boom, while communities and peoples are still suffering the consequences of multiple interrelated crises: socio-economic, health, environmental and violence. High mineral prices, threats to interrupt of supply chains requiring raw materials, the energy transition, in addition to extractivist policies and outsider colonialist logic that seeks to capitalize on any possible circumstance to further foreign interests, have served as an impetus for greater speculation and expansion of the sector in this period. Together, these processes have deepened repression, violence and social control over populations from governments and companies.

Despite the numerous threats, the report concludes by looking at the significant resistance to the mining model that has persisted despite the context of violence and climate and ecological disaster.

(Continued next column)

(From last Column) **No Reprieve For life and territory:**

For communities and people on the front lines against mining, their experiences over these last two years have reinforced the importance of continuing to defend territory, clean water and air, and livelihoods and livelihoods. In short, it is not possible to "stay at home" when everything is at risk.

The Coalition Against the Mining Pandemic is a group of environmental justice organizations, networks and initiatives from North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin America working in global solidarity with communities, Indigenous peoples and workers to respond to mining abuses related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report forms part of a global research collaboration, which includes case studies developed in partnership with communities and grassroots groups in 23 countries. In early June, the Coalition will publish reports based on parallel analyses in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America.

For more information or to arrange an interview:

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You can find quotes from the report and brief context for the case studies: <https://miningwatch.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c89185f430617e4dc1a02762e&id=94c6f312fc&e=1186657b4b>.

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Ex-Guatemala officers to stand trial for civil war crimes

By Sonia Perez, AP news, May 6, 2022: *From; Rights Action*

GUATEMALA CITY — A judge in Guatemala ruled Friday that nine former police and military officers will stand trial for a range of alleged crimes, including forced disappearances, torture and killings during that country's civil war.

In reading his decision, Judge Miguel Angel Gálvez recounted testimony about acts of torture, forced disappearance and killing.

"They put them on planes and tossed them into the ocean to get rid of evidence of torture," he said, also describing the ripping out of fingernails and tongues, sexual assaults and electrocuting men's genitals, all allegedly on the orders of the accused.

The case stems from a document from Guatemala's civil war recovered in 1999 known as the "Military Diary." Inside, military officials logged forced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and the torture of 183 people.

The men on trial were high-ranking military and police officers arrested last year and implicated in the cases described in the document by nature of the command positions they held when the crimes occurred between 1983 and 1986.

In 2012, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights declared the Guatemalan government responsible for the forced disappearances of 26 people listed in the Military Diary, as well as for the violation of their rights to personal freedom, health and life. The victims were student leaders, labor activists, and guerrilla fighters. The document describes not only the victims, but details surveillance tactics, captures and killings.

Among the first victims registered in the document was Samayoa Morales, also known as "Sheny," a member of the Urban Front of the Organization of People in Arms, one of the four guerrilla organizations. The entry included her photo and noted that she had visited Cuba, was later turned over to a Guatemalan military entity and then nothing else was recorded about her fate.

Some of the entries include code. For example, researchers determined that the number 300, meant killed. There are people in the document who survived and others who were never heard from again.

Rudy Gustavo Figueroa Muñoz was an academic who was arrested October 12, 1984. He was allegedly the head of a guerrilla cell. A coded entry notes the day and location his body was later found.

His family knew he had been abducted. They searched jails, hospitals and military bases, but no one told them anything. Months later his body was dumped just yards from their home.

Former president Hernandez's 'Dream Team' mounts a bold and sometimes bizarre legal defense

By David Adams & Jeff Ernst, 10 May 2022

They call themselves a legal 'Dream Team' and plan to call Donald Trump, Joe Biden and Barack Obama to testify in favor of their client. That's the opening salvo from the defense team of former Honduran president, Juan Orlando Hernandez, two weeks after he was extradited to stand trial in New York accused of operating the country as a "narco state."

Hernandez is due to appear in court for the first time on Tuesday for his arraignment, where he is expected to plead not guilty to three counts of drug trafficking and illegal use of weapons.

Facing life in prison if convicted, Hernandez's legal team have gone on the offensive from day one, defending their client in the media as a hero in the war on drugs and bragging that they will achieve an historic victory in court.

In a statement to Univision, his lawyer Raymond Colon, said his client was innocent and "this prosecution is tantamount to a character assassination masquerading as a prosecution."

He accused the Justice Department of "a misguided crusade" against "the U.S. government's greatest ally in the 'War on the drugs'; based on fabricated evidence and the vengeance-vendetta of the very Narco-Delinquents that the President extradited while in office."

Two members of the defense team told Univision that Trump, Biden and Obama would be "compelled" to testify - as well as the former head of the CIA, Mike Pompeo - about the U.S. government's close collaboration with Hernandez during his eight years in office.

During a visit to the CIA headquarters in 2017, Hernandez's defense team says he was given boxes of National Security documents despite supposedly being under investigation for drug trafficking. "What a story. We will request all of these documents be admitted as evidence," said Jay Levy, a Florida-based rabbi who is working pro bono for the defense team.

Levy said he joined the defense team on behalf of New York Rabbi Aron Lankry, who is supporting Hernandez's legal fight in recognition of his championing of Israel at the United Nations in a historic vote in 2017 over international recognition of the disputed holy city Jerusalem as its capital. "We are doing this for what [Hernandez] he did for Israel," he said.

Lankry who has a synagogue in Monsey, a city just north of New York City, was appointed by Hernandez as the chief rabbi of Honduras in 2019.

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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org
For info contact Laura at (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email: L4peace@telus.net.

They asked a shaman

"What is poison?"

- Anything beyond what we need is poison.

It can be power, laziness, food, ego, ambition, vanity, fear, anger, or whatever.

- What is fear?

Non acceptance of uncertainty

If we accept uncertainty, it becomes adventure.

What is envy?

- No acceptance of good in the other.

If we accept good, it becomes inspiration.

What is anger?

- No acceptance of what is beyond our control.

If we accept, it becomes tolerance.

What is hate?

- Non-acceptance of people as they are
If we accept unconditionally, it becomes love. "

UniverSOUL awakening

"Sometimes being a friend means mastering the art of timing. There is a time for silence. A time to let go and allow people to hurl themselves into their own destiny. And a time to prepare to pick up the pieces when it's all over."

Octavia Butler

(From page 2) Former president Hernandez's

Leading the defense's assault in the media is a colorful Dominican-American private investigator, Angel Martinez, who presents himself on YouTube as a top criminal defense expert.

"This case, gentlemen, this is going to be like a movie," he said in a 30-minute YouTube presentation in Spanish during which he laid out the defense strategy. "I'm the star here... I'm going to highlight modern investigation and shrewdness, how to present – and destroy - a witness... This is going to be monumental," he added.

Insults and a defamation law suit

Univision was unable to verify many aspects of Martinez's biography and claims of professional achievements, including undercover work with multiple U.S. government agencies.

But some of his own actions and statements have many questioning his tactics.

Last week, Martínez filed a bizarre \$20 million defamation lawsuit in a New York court against Luis Redondo, president of the Honduran Congress, and Milton Benítez, a commentator and the current minister of communications in Honduras. Martínez accused them of spreading false information about him that was damaging his reputation.

The lawsuit itself, however, appears more defamatory than the supposedly false information it cites as evidence. Among many wild accusations, it accuses Redondo and Benítez of being members of a drug cartel directed by another former president, Manuel 'Mel' Zelaya, who is the husband of the current president, Xiomara Castro.

While Zelaya has been named in U.S. drug cases as being suspected of receiving payments from drug traffickers, he has never been charged with a crime, nor has he ever been named as a member of a drug cartel by U.S. law enforcement officials. Neither Redondo nor Benítez have been linked to drug trafficking. Martinez has separately accused a retired senior DEA official, Mike Vigil, of also spreading false information.

"It's absurd, ridiculous. If this is the best that they have, shame on them," said Vigil, a respected former head of international operations for the DEA who is often sought out by the media for his expertise. "Who in their right mind would hire this guy?" he added.

Univision confirmed that Martinez was hired by the office of attorney Raymond Colon in New York, who appeared in court to represent Hernandez at his initial appearance last month.

Martinez has compared the defense team assembled by Colon to the famous 'Dream Team' that successfully represented disgraced former American Football player OJ Simpson, who was acquitted by jury of murdering his wife in 1995.

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WHAT'S UP?

United Nations International Days

July 18: Nelson Mandela International Day

July 30: International Day of Friendship

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

August 6th & 9th: Hiroshima Day in Castlegar and **Nagasaki Day** in Grand Forks. Watch for announcements.

Peace Symbol Contest 2022 sponsored by Regina Peace Council & Regina Peace Quest: Create peace symbol on any surface, take a photo and send to makingpeace100@gmail.com before Aug. 31st. Winners of peace related gifts to be announced on Sept. 21st, International Day of Peace (More details on BPI website).

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at

<http://www.canada.gc.ca>

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email **L4peace@telus.net**.

The BPI is an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Peace Pledge Union, Stop Ecocide Canada, Abolition 2000 & CNANW and works with local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

(From page 3) **Former president Hernandez's 'Dream Team'**

"Hypocrisy" in the drug war

In a recent YouTube talk, Martinez accused the U.S. government of "pure hypocrisy" in the war on drugs. He used maps to give a history lesson about Honduras' role as a trampoline for South American cocaine smuggled by the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico, claiming that Hernandez bravely stood up to the traffickers, and was widely praised by U.S. officials for his cooperation.

"What is the message being sent in the war on drugs? That first the United States extracts all the juice out of you and then extradites you and sends to prison," he added, saying the defense would introduce into evidence "all the trophies and decorations that have been given to this man."

To be sure, Hernandez was for several years considered a U.S. ally in the war on drugs and illegal migration, especially during the Trump administration. [DEA agents in Honduras began to suspect him of conspiring with traffickers](#) to finance his political campaigns following his election in 2013.

Hernandez has long defended himself as being the victim of vengeful drug traffickers and murderers who were extradited from Honduras to the United States during his government. While some of the witnesses have confessed to smuggling tons of cocaine and murdering dozens of victims, prosecutors say their testimony has been corroborated by other witnesses, as well as physical evidence.

"It's very common to use other traffickers to testify. You're not going to get a priest to testify against someone like Joaquin El Chapo Guzman (the jailed former head of the Sinaloa cartel). He's not going to have the kind of evidence you need," said Vigil. "The U.S. doesn't just take the word of narcos. It has to be corroborated. There are others who don't have criminal backgrounds," he added.

Legal experts say it's unlikely that a judge would allow the defense to call Trump, Biden or Obama. "The government will file a motion to quash any subpoena for them all on the basis of relevance," said criminal defense attorney Joaquin Perez, who represents a Honduran trafficker linked to the case.

He noted that in similar cases prosecutors have argued that it was like an accused bank robber claiming he was innocent and calling a bank manager to testify to all the times the defendant entered the bank without robbing it. "The fact that he was good for 23 hours of the day doesn't excuse him for the last hour when he was not," said Perez.

Government officials explained to Univision Noticias that few people in government would have known about the investigation of Hernández, particularly in its early stages.

"It doesn't surprise me that his lawyers are at least saying they'll call big name witnesses. Of course, it's a matter of record that we worked closely with Honduras during his tenure to reduce violence, purge the police, and extradite narcos," said one former senior U.S. government official.

"It's also clear that our political and foreign policy leaders weren't aware that he was under investigation," he added.

Nobody in history has gotten their freedom by appealing to the moral sense of the people oppressing them.

Assata Shakur

There is difference and there is power. And who holds the power decides the meaning of the difference.

June Jordan