

# *Prominent Honduran Rural Leader Under Police Protection Killed*

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Tegucigalpa, October 20 (RHC)-- Honduras' prominent rural leader and head of the Unified Campesinos Movement of the Aguan Valley, or MUCA, Jose Angel Flores was assassinated in Tocoa, in the northern department of Colon.

The information was confirmed by MUCA's former President Johnny Rivas on Radio Progreso, without further details. Rivas blamed the assassination on the forces opposing the rural struggle for the right to land. Flores had been under police protection since March, after many death threats.

Despite the protective measures, imposed on the Honduran state by the International Human Rights Court, Honduran police arrested Flores and his wife in March, alleging without proof that he was hiding weapons in his home.

They were released on the same day due to the pressure of 300 campesinos who demonstrated in front of the police station until a judge ordered his release because of the lack of a warrant arrest.

Campesino groups have denounced a campaign of assassinations ordered by the bigger landowners, in the context of a land reform implemented under former President Rafael Callejas, who is currently serving a prison sentence in the United States on corruption charges.

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