

Report: Honduran Company and Military Planned Berta Caceres Murder



Tegucigalpa, November 2 (RHC-agencies)--A hydroelectric company that environmental activist Berta Caceres had fought plotted with Honduran military and security forces to kill the Indigenous leader in March 2016, an independent commission has found.

The investigation was carried out by the International Group of Advisors and Expert Persons, (GAIPE) which is comprised of several lawyers from Guatemala, Colombia, Holland and the United States and was based on dozens of interviews, court records and partial access to evidence provided by government investigators.

The GAIPE found that high-level executives of Energy Development SA (DESA) and government officials began planning the assassination of Caceres at least four months before they carried it out.

Roxana Althozt, a lawyer with GAIPE said, "DESA high-level directors, [Honduran] state agents and criminal elements" formed a criminal network to "assassinate Berta Caceres."

The 92-page report was commissioned by Berta Caceres's indigenous rights organization.

Honduran authorities have arrested eight people for the murder, however, the GAIPE investigation points to other suspects.

Caceres was an important and vocal activist within the Civic Council of Popular Organizations and Honduran Indigenous. For over two decades she worked to protect the lands of the Lenca Indigenous of Honduras, and successfully fought DESA's construction of the hydroelectric dam, Agua Zarca on the White River despite continual death threats and militarization of the area by Honduran forces.

A year before Caceres was gunned down in her home in northeastern Honduras, she was awarded the Goldman Environmental Award for her continued environmental activism against DESA and the hydroelectric dam, located close to Lenca tribe sacred space.

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