



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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October 21, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I am writing again to express the support of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for a peaceful resolution of the political crisis in Honduras. We urge the United States government to support the Honduran people in achieving an agreement and the beginning of a process of societal reconciliation.

On October 8, 2009, the Catholic bishops of Honduras wrote a statement expressing the hope and desire to see their country move forward and begin the process of reconciliation and rebuilding of their society. We express our solidarity with our brother bishops and affirm their call for an “urgent need for a just, peaceful, accepted solution,” and their assessment that “any form of violence in words or deed, would be harmful.” A copy of the statement of the Honduran bishops is enclosed.

Our Conference is praying that the people of Honduras come to a peaceful resolution of their situation. We continue to extend solidarity with the Church in Honduras as it seeks ways to bring peace and reconciliation in their country.

The defense of human rights is a pillar of U.S. international policy and a particular concern for our Conference of Bishops which works to protect the life and dignity of the human person. The rights of all Hondurans must be respected in order to rebuild trust. We ask our government to keep human rights and respect for human dignity at the forefront as it supports the Honduran people in resolving the political crisis in their country.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard

Bishop of Albany

Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

Enclosure

Statement by the Conference of Bishops of Honduras

“Let us, then, pursue what leads to peace and to building up one another”

(Romans 14:19)

(Unofficial English Translation)

1 – The bishops of the Conference of Bishops of Honduras, meeting in ordinary assembly, feel closely united with all people inside and outside Honduras who have focused their attention on the dialogue under way to seek a constructive solution to the country’s political crisis.

2 – We have experienced, in the church and in society, the suffering, divisions and violence that this prolonged crisis has caused. We have felt the worry and fear that a solution would be sought through violence.

3 – We express our support for the dialogue that began again on October 7. We have always called for sincere dialogue in a diligent search for the best solution for all, in charity and truth.

4 – We call on those directly involved in the dialogue, and those they represent, that “overcoming individualistic tendencies, each one strives to pursue truth and to tenaciously seek the common good” (words of Pope Benedict XVI about the situation in Honduras, after the Angelus on Sunday, July 12, 2009).

5 – We cannot continue in uncertainty, personal and social tension, and economic breakdown. There is an urgent need for a just, peaceful, accepted solution that ensures “peaceful coexistence and an authentic democratic life” (words of Pope Benedict XVI).

6 – The presence of members of the OAS, the European Community, and the national and international press is a sign of the interest in dialogue that will bring the country to a safe harbor. The people of Honduras have high hopes for this national dialogue, and these hopes cannot be frustrated, as that would lead to greater disillusionment and increased personal and social tension.

7 – In this atmosphere of dialogue, which must be respectful and understanding, any form of violence, in word or deed, would be harmful, would undermine attitudes conducive to dialogue, and would lead to the loss of credibility of those who provoke it.

8 – We believe that the dialogue is not simply conflict-resolution technique, but that it has an ethical dimension, as it implies moral attitudes and is at the service of all that is good, just and true for our people. Those who sit at the “dialogue table” therefore have a serious responsibility before God and society, which they must not forget or underestimate.

9 – We are aware that a political agreement is not the complete solution to the serious problems afflicting Honduras, but at least it will place the country in an institutional position to address them, within the framework of a joint plan, with the participation of all, with subsidiarity and with a new style of political administration that “makes the common good the greatest imperative for building our society” (Pastoral Letter from the Conference of Bishops of Honduras, “In the Ways of Peace,” No. 15, March 2006).

10 – We pray with insistence and trust that God will grant us, and especially those responsible for this dialogue, wisdom, the ability to listen, social sensitivity and a spirit of discernment. We know that many other people are praying for this intention. We invite the Catholic faithful and all believers to intensify this prayer so that God will grant us times of peaceful coexistence, social justice and development with solidarity.

Tegucigalpa, October 8, 2009

Conference of Bishops of Honduras

Oscar A. Cardinal Rodríguez M., SDB
Archbishop of Tegucigalpa and
President of the Conference of Bishops

Bishop Luis Alfonso Santos, SDB
Bishop of Santa Rosa de Copán

Bishop Roberto Camilleri, OFM
Bishop of Comayagua

Bishop Juan Luis Giasson, PME
Bishop of Yoro

Bishop Juan José Pineda, CMF
Auxiliary Bishop of Tegucigalpa

Bishop Guido Plante, PME
Bishop of Choluteca and
Secretary General of the Conference of Bishops

Bishop Angel Garachana, CMF
Bishop of San Pedro Sula and
Vice President of the Conference of Bishops

(Absent from the country)
Bishop Mauro Muldoon, OFM
Bishop of Juticalpa

Bishop Luis Solé Fa, CM
Bishop of Trujillo

Bishop Rómulo Emiliani Sánchez, OMF
Auxiliary Bishop of San Pedro Sula

Bishop Darwin Rudy Andino, CRS
Auxiliary Bishop of Tegucigalpa