



THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

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LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND – FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL – FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

General Secretariat - Office for International Affairs and Human Rights

Statement by LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko on the situation in Honduras 2 July 2009

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is very concerned by the situation in Honduras, following the military coup d'état on Sunday, 28 June 2009. Having been involved in humanitarian relief and development work in Honduras since 1998, the LWF considers that the instability and polarization of society provoked by these events risks undermining hard-won development gains, fostering widespread social upheaval and worsening conflict in the country.

The international community has expressed its strong opposition to the action of the armed forces in Honduras, including especially in the unanimous resolution of the UN General Assembly on 30 June 2009 condemning the coup d'état and demanding the restoration of the democratically-elected government. It is imperative that the international community, particularly the governments of the Latin American region and the Organization of American States (OAS), take appropriate actions to give practical effect to these expressions.

The LWF condemns the use of armed force and unconstitutional means to resolve political disputes. The people of Honduras and the region have suffered enough from military arrogations of power in the past. Such actions cannot resolve underlying disputes and competing claims, and must not be allowed to be part of Honduras' future. Moreover, the military coup in Honduras (re)creates a very bad example in a region in which democratic processes and institutions are still in some places in their infancy. I therefore join all those around the world who have called for the restitution of the democratically-elected government of Honduras, and the resumption of the constitutional and political process in Honduras.

The LWF calls for the cessation of all police and military action against the civilian population of Honduras, and the release of all those detained in the protests over the last few days.

The LWF urges the international community - and especially the OAS - to establish mechanisms to help mediate the current crisis, to support the democratic process leading to elections scheduled for 29 November this year and to oversee the transition to a new government following those elections.

I am particularly concerned by the risk of political confrontation turning to violent conflict when President Zelaya returns to Honduras, as he has vowed to do upon expiry

of the OAS deadline for restitution of the elected government. I call upon all parties and their supporters to choose the path of political dialogue, rather than violence.

For the sake of the people of Honduras, I pray for wisdom to prevail in the midst of the current crisis and tensions.

The Lutheran World Federation, through its Department for World Service, has been active with humanitarian assistance in Honduras since Hurricane Mitch in 1998. LWF/DWS Honduras works in several regions of Honduras, including Santa Barbara, Copán, Colón, Olancho, and El Valle, and is currently involved in responding to the earthquake of May 2009 within the framework of Action of Churches Together (ACT). LWF/DWS Honduras works in close cooperation with the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras, which is a member church of the Lutheran World Federation.