

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS,
4 de octubre de 2015.

Mr. LUIS ALMAGRO,
Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Washington, DC.

We respectfully write to you to provide an official response to the proposal made by the Organization of American States (OAS) to create a "Support Mission against Corruption and Impunity" or "MACCIH" in Honduras. We consider the proposal to contain many weaknesses and insufficient to combat corruption in Honduras.

The weaknesses we see in the proposal include:

1. It lacks an independent and impartial investigative unit capable of carrying out investigations of cases of corruption. Such a unit needs to be financially and politically independent and be comprised of international investigators and lawyers who can work with national prosecutors in the prosecution of high-level corruption cases.

2. The recommendations that will flow from the evaluations to be carried out by the MACCIH are not binding. It is essential to ensure the legal commitment of the Honduran government to implementing the recommendations. Recent history has shown that the government of Honduras often fails to comply with the recommendations of international bodies. An illustrative example was the failure to comply with the 47th recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which called for the creation of an International Commission against Impunity in Honduras.

3. Since 1998, Honduras has participated in three of the four rounds of the MESICIC (Follow-up mechanism for implementations of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption). Despite this participation, the country is in a state of deep social crisis with endemic levels of the corruption and impunity [and so the proposal to develop a plan for implementing the MESICIC does not seem likely to lead to action.]

4. The presentation of bi-annual reports by the Secretary General of the OAS represents an unnecessary delay in addressing the impunity and corruption crisis.

Considering these weaknesses, any proposal intended to lead to real results in the fight against corruption needs to have at least two essential components:

1. A politically and financially independent investigative unit able to initiate and help prosecute high-level corruption cases.

2. A mechanism by which recommendations have a binding character in order to ensure the implementation of reforms to our justice system.

If the OAS proposal fails to include the characteristics needed to make a valuable contribution to the corruption and impunity crisis in Honduras, we will ask the international community not to support the proposal financially or politically. We need a proposal that can help bring about changes in our society; we want justice and democracy.

CITIZEN MOVEMENT
"OPOSICIÓN INDIGNADA,"
PAUL EMILIO ZEPEDA,
GABRIELA LILIANA BLEN,
MARCELA ALEJANDRA
ORTEGA,
ARIEL FABRICIO VARELA.

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS,
4 de octubre de 2015.

Sr. LUIS ALMAGRO,
Secretario General de la Organización de Estados Americanos Su despacho.

Nos dirigimos respetuosamente a usted a fin de señalar nuestras observaciones a la propuesta generada por la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) ante la crisis so-

cial provocada por las altas tasas de corrupción e impunidad que aquejan al Estado de Honduras, propuesta denominada "MACCIH", misma que cuenta con una serie de debilidades que nos preocupan seriamente como herramienta para luchar contra la corrupción y la impunidad en Honduras, subrayando:

1. No cuenta con un ente independiente e imparcial de investigación de los casos de corrupción. Es de vital importancia contar con una unidad con independencia presupuestaria y jerárquica donde investigadores y abogados internacionales junto con fiscales hondureños de reconocida capacidad puedan realizar la investigación y judicialización de actos de corrupción.

2. Las recomendaciones producto de los diagnósticos a realizarse no tienen carácter vinculante. Es necesario que exista obligación por parte del Estado de Honduras para el cumplimiento de las recomendaciones a través del documento legal pertinente, la historia reciente ha demostrado que el Gobierno de Honduras no cumple las recomendaciones de organismos internacionales, resaltamos como ejemplo la recomendación número 47 de la Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, que expresaba el establecimiento de una Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad en Honduras, hecha pública en Tegucigalpa, el 7 de Julio de 2011, en acto al cual asistieron el presidente de dicha comisión, Sr. Eduardo Stein, el Secretario General de la OEA en ese momento Sr. Jose Miguel Insulza y el entonces Presidente de Honduras, Sr. Porfirio Lobo Sosa.

3. Los resultados de la participación de Honduras desde 1998 en 3 de las 4 rondas del MESICIC, es un estado en crisis profunda de Impunidad y corrupción consecuencia de lo señalado anteriormente, por la falta de voluntad de los gobernantes en el cumplimiento de recomendaciones no vinculantes.

4. La creación de informes de manera semestral al Secretario General de la OEA para señalar obstáculos no resueltos por el enlace de gobierno, representa una dilatación enorme a la solución de la crisis de impunidad y corrupción en Honduras, sobretodo porque al carecer de vinculación el obstáculo no podrá resolverse aún este se vea reflejado en dichos informes.

En vista de lo anteriormente expuesto, consideramos que toda propuesta que busque resultados reales en la lucha contra la corrupción, debe contar con dos elementos esenciales:

1. Un ente de investigación independiente política y económicamente, que se encargue de esclarecer y llevar a juicio a los implicados en los casos de corrupción que sacuden nuestra sociedad.

2. Carácter de cumplimiento obligatorio a las recomendaciones que resulten de los diagnósticos al Estado de Honduras, si no hay una obligación no hay seguridad que las recomendaciones se ejecuten y por consiguiente la crisis continuara.

En caso de que esta iniciativa no logre implementar características que le permitan aportar a resolver la crisis de Impunidad y Corrupción que enfrenta Honduras, rechazamos formalmente dicha propuesta.

Finalmente, señalar que la propuesta de una Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad (CICI) se mantiene vigente como una herramienta eficiente y como un caso de éxito internacionalmente comprobado, ya que cuenta con características de investigación y fortalecimiento de las capacidades nacionales para la lucha contra la Impunidad y Corrupción, en contextos institucionales similares a los que tenemos en Honduras, a diferencia de la denominada MACCIH que aun es solo un ensayo no

comprobado y que carece de las características previamente señaladas.

Sin otro particular y expresando nuestras más altas muestras de respeto y estima, nos despedimos de usted.

Atentamente,
OPOSICIÓN INDIGNADA,
PAUL EMILIO ZEPEDA,
GABRIELA LILIANA BLEN,
MARCELA ALEJANDRA
ORTEGA,
ARIEL FABRICIO VARELA.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on Tuesday, November 3, 2015, I recorded an erroneous vote on the amendment offered by Mr. RIBBLE of Wisconsin. I intended to vote "no" on roll call vote No. 588, on agreeing to the Ribble Amendment to H.R. 22.

IN RECOGNITION OF JEAN MRASEK

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of an outstanding Texan, Jean M. Mrasek, as she recently concluded her distinguished work as Chairman of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC).

This conference represents 26 sororities with a member base of more than four million women at 655 campuses and 4,500 alumnae chapters in the United States and Canada. Sororities and fraternities are the largest values-based organizations on college campuses and among the most successful leadership development programs for college students. National sororities are the largest women's leadership organizations on hundreds of campuses and they continue to grow because of the value they provide in helping collegiate women become better scholars, leaders, and citizens.

As Chairman of NPC, Jean was a leading voice on contemporary issues of sorority life and for all collegiate women. As a proud University of Tulsa alumna and past national president of her sorority Chi Omega, Jean's unyielding passion for Greek life is reflected in her lifetime commitment to serving others. Under her leadership, NPC has increased their membership, developed a new visual identity as part of a new communications plan, created new forms of risk-management education, and furthered the organizational effectiveness of the sorority world, speaking for the interests of college women everywhere. Jean's long-term commitment to her Chi Omega chapter, its international organization, and the entire Greek community make her a role model for women who aspire to make a difference in the lives of other women.

I have personally had the opportunity to work with Jean over the years as she has come to Washington to tirelessly advocate for students across the country on issues ranging

from college affordability, improving student housing, preserving the vital role of charitable support for higher education, and fighting to make campuses safer for all students. Jean Mrasek has provided exemplary service in advancing the NPC's ability to positively influence the lives of so many collegiate women.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING MARIANO ULIBARRI,
DIRECTOR OF THE LAS VEGAS
PARACHUTE FACTORY

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mariano Ulibarri, Director of the Parachute Factory of Las Vegas, for his outstanding work in youth community engagement.

Mr. Ulibarri is the founder of the Parachute Factory, a community makerspace that has quickly made itself a staple in the Las Vegas community. A makerspace is an area where individuals are able to congregate and engage in creative, do-it-yourself projects that provide beneficial skills and goods for their home communities. After hearing about "Hacker Scouts," an Oakland, California based organization, Mr. Ulibarri was inspired to start a local chapter within the Las Vegas community. Guild #005 has provided the youth of Las Vegas with the opportunity to educate their fellow community members by hosting demonstrations with local groups such as woodworkers and through cultural skills workshops and a variety of other beneficial events.

The Parachute Factory works in partnership with the Media Arts/Tech Department at New Mexico Highlands University and the New Mexico State Library. This organization has been recognized by esteemed entities, such as Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, for its innovative approach and effective practices toward progressive community engagement and learning. At a time where our country needs to invest in more Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education and skill building for youth, minorities, and women, the Parachute Factory stands as a shining example for others to emulate. Mr. Ulibarri is currently in Washington, D.C. attending the "National Science Foundation's 2015 Maker Summit." His organization is among 30 groups selected from across the nation that will have the distinct honor of presenting about their charitable work.

I applaud Mr. Ulibarri's service to the community and efforts to provide mentoring and learning opportunities for young, tech savvy children. I congratulate Mr. Ulibarri and the Parachute Factory, and thank the entire organization for its exceptional service to our community.

EXPRESSING CONCERN WITH FINANCIAL TRAPS AIMED AT VETERANS

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak for veterans as we approach Veterans Day this year. These brave men and women risked their lives to protect us all. Yet, today we have companies actively preying on veterans. This is appalling and needs to end.

Some of the worst offenses come from payday lenders. Payday loans are high-cost, small-dollar loans, averaging \$300 per loan. What makes these loans so dangerous is that they have average interest rates in the triple digits—at times as high as 391 percent. If at the end of the loan period, which typically spans two weeks or the next payday, the borrower cannot pay it off, he or she will be forced to take out another loan to pay off the first loan in addition to the exorbitant accumulated interest. This is the beginning of a cycle of debt.

Veterans are highly susceptible to these practices and have become a customer base for these loan schemes. In fact, payday lenders have been known to set up around military bases. In 2006, Congress passed the Military Lending Act to cap interest rates for military loans, but even so, these lenders find ways to exploit servicemembers, veterans, and military families. One study found that 10 percent of veterans leave military service with more than \$40,000 in debt. If our men and women heed the call to defend our country, they should not be led to financial traps that could prevent them from transitioning to civilian life successfully.

This Veterans Day, I stand with veterans and urge both the private lending sector and Congress to do more to protect our veterans, who deserve our utmost respect.

HONORING THE ZARZYCKI MANOR
CHAPELS ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Zarzycki Manor Chapels as they commemorate 100 years of dedicated service to the people of Chicagoland.

For a century, Zarzycki Manor Chapels has stood as a pillar of support for Chicagoland families in their times of hardship and grief. The Zarzycki Manor Chapels' motto is "Modern Service with Traditional Dignity." By treating every family with care and respect, the Zarzycki family has earned the admiration and gratitude of the community.

Zarzycki Funeral Home was founded in 1915 by Ms. Agnes S. Zarzycki; a Polish immigrant and the first woman funeral director of Polish descent in Chicago. Ms. Zarzycki and her husband Stanislaw ran the funeral parlor out of their home throughout the early years of

the business. Early on they withstood hard times and remained dedicated to helping grieving families throughout the influenza epidemic. After Stanislaw's death in 1927, Agnes continued to run the Zarzycki Funeral Home through the Great Depression.

Agnes and Stanislaw had five children. Their son Casimir took over the business and expanded it, creating the Zarzycki Manor Chapels. After many successful years, Casimir turned the business over to his son, Richard. Richard and his wife Charmaine worked together at the Zarzycki Manor Chapels for over 35 years.

In 2006, Richard passed away leaving the business to Charmaine and their two daughters, Claudette and Andrea. As third and fourth generation female funeral directors, they admirably uphold the founder's legacy of strength, independence, and hard work.

Today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Zarzycki Manor Chapels and honoring the Zarzycki family for the care and comfort they provide to so many in the community.

THE GOFFSTOWN GRIZZLIES
FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the Goffstown Grizzlies football team in New Hampshire's First District. The Grizzlies, representing Goffstown High School with just a thousand students, have an amazing story of perseverance and achievement.

Thanks to their coach, the team qualified for a Division 3 championship a few years ago and advanced to Division 1, the toughest in the Granite State. Even their fans thought competing at that high level would be a tall order.

The Grizzlies are undefeated this season. They enter Saturday's Division 1 playoff game ranked number one. It will be their first home playoff game. And they got there with exciting defense and special teams play, blocking punts and returning kickoffs for touchdowns.

They have the Granite State's fiercest line-backing crew and the sack leader. Their kicker boots 45-yard field goals, helping his team to average more than 42 points a game. The running back rushed for a thousand yards this season and scored over twenty touchdowns. The Grizzlies have New Hampshire's most potent passing attack.

Their spirited fans make it easy to be a Grizzlies fan, not that you'd need any more reason to like this impressive team of underdogs, who take on the Second District's North Nashua Titans this weekend.

I wish both teams well but the Grizzlies a little better.

HONOR VETERANS BY STOPPING
THE DEBT TRAP

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Veterans Day next week I would like to speak-