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ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS UNDER ATTACK IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to Hold Special Hearing Friday on Environmental Defenders Under Attack

Victims and Experts will testify on the Criminal Persecution of Environmental Defenders for their work including Assaults, Arbitrary Imprisonment, Defamation, and Smear Campaigns

As Climate Change Crisis Grows, Fossil Fuel Companies and other Polluters Conspire with Corrupt Governments to Target Climate Activists

New Report Documents Attacks - Press Conference After Hearing

Never before in human history has the Earth's climate system been so threatened. And never before have environmental defenders been under so much attack. As scientists warn about the climate emergency and the existential threat of irreversible climate change, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) will hold a hearing on Friday, September 27, in Washington, D.C. about the persecution of environmental defenders in the Americas, the region with the highest rate of attacks. Some of the Earth's most influential, and yet most vulnerable, environmental defenders will testify about States' improper manipulation of criminal investigations and prosecutions as a means of undermining and thwarting environmental activism—allowing States and corporations to exploit natural resources unsustainably, degrade the Earth, and perpetuate climate change with impunity.

Environmental defenders, victims of criminalization, and grassroots environmental leaders will gather at the hemisphere's premier inter-governmental human rights body to share their life stories and to offer their evidence of States attacking and criminalizing their work.

The hearing testimony will draw attention to the increasingly sophisticated and alarming State practice of criminalizing environmental defenders' work with smear campaigns, false accusations, continuous harassment, and unwarranted criminal investigations and prosecutions aimed at environmental defenders and their families. The hearing will also examine the ways in which corporate and state-sponsored polluters with political power, and corrupt control over judges and courts, wage a sustained and effective fight against environmental defenders and their supporters. Experts and environmental defenders will make recommendations to the Commission on actions to increase the protection of defenders.

The hearing is open to accredited news media and to the public. In addition, a new landmark report on the criminalization of environmental defenders will be released and a press conference will be held immediately afterwards at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

LIVE Connection to hearing: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/> - click "173" under the main image for instructions

For more information on the event, please contact:

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What: Thematic Hearing on the Misuse of Criminal Justice Systems to Punish Environmental Defenders

When: Friday, September 27, 2019 from 9:00am – 10:00am

Where: IACHR Headquarters, 1889 F Street, NW, Washington DC. Salon Rubio, OAS