



PRESS RELEASE

40 'Alternative Nobel Prize' recipients from 29 countries demand that the government of Costa Rica take decisive steps to address the murder of indigenous leader Sergio Rojas and accelerate the restoration of indigenous lands.

They also demand the protection of indigenous communities and the full implementation of precautionary measures ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2012

This demand is delivered directly to the President of Costa Rica, Carlos Alvarado, to the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and to the Judicial Power.

San José (Costa Rica), Córdoba (Argentina), May 13, 2019. A total of 40 Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award, widely known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize,' from 29 countries demand that the Costa Rican government take action on the murder of the indigenous Bribri leader, Sergio Rojas. They demand that the assassination "be investigated to its ultimate consequences" and "the restoration of native lands to the Bribri, Bröran and Bruncaj indigenous communities", as well as "the remaining indigenous peoples of Costa Rica, be accelerated."

Sergio Rojas was shot 15 times in Salitre, in southern Costa Rica, on March 18, 2019. These recipients of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' collectively expressed their "pain and dismay". They stated that "the people of Costa Rica, the indigenous communities of America and humanity itself also took those 15 bullets. Yet violence has been and will continue to be a useless ploy to silence champions of liberty and justice like Sergio Rojas, because his ideas and struggles are more alive and vibrant today than ever before".

The Right Livelihood Award Laureates added that "prior to Sergio Rojas' death there was a long road of avoidable violence, perpetrated by the government and private sectors. This is a path that must never be traveled again".

"The Right Livelihood Award recognizes some of the most courageous and impactful changemakers in the world. A total of 40 Award recipients from 29 countries are now demanding that the Costa Rican government (1) launch an in-depth investigation into the murder of Sergio Rojas, (2) fully implement the country's Indigenous Law, and (3) better protect indigenous people's rights. Our Laureates will not rest until these demands are met," said Ole von Uexkull, Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation. The Foundation is based in Sweden, where the Right Livelihood Award is presented annually.

"Both the absence of the National State in Salitre, and the state's failure to comply with Precautionary Measure 321-12, which was ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), allowed for the premeditated murder of Sergio Rojas to be finally carried out", said Dr. Raúl Montenegro, who received the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' in 2004, and who is professor at the National University of Córdoba in Argentina.

Requirements to the government.

The 40 Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award stated: "It cannot be tolerated that violent people who flagrantly disrespect the law continue to act with impunity in Salitre: enough

wounded, mutilated, and indigenous deaths in Costa Rica, and enough National State absence". The Laureates demand:

- a) That the assassination of Sergio Rojas and the previous acts of violence be investigated to their ultimate consequences, and that those found guilty be convicted.
- b) That Indigenous Law 6172 and its regulations, Precautionary Measure 321-12 of the IACHR and Convention 169 on Indigenous Rights of the International Labor Organization (ILO), be fulfilled.
- c) That the State of Costa Rica order the security forces to effectively protect the persons, families, and properties of the Bribri, Bröran, and Bruncaj indigenous communities of the province of Puntarenas, and especially those who live on recently recovered lands, which now belong to them by virtue of Indigenous Law 6172. We suggest that the State agree and coordinate with the indigenous organizations to establish the modalities, mechanisms, and guarantees of that protection.
- d) That the Justice system investigates the illicit ties between non-indigenous people, the action of armed bands, and the existence of zones deprived of public security, which empower armed groups to commit violence with total impunity.
- e) That the total area of lands recognized by the Indigenous Law 6172 be restored to the Bribri, Bröran, and Bruncaj communities that inhabit the province of Puntarenas, and to all the remaining indigenous peoples of Costa Rica.
- f) That the project of Law on the Autonomy of Indigenous Peoples be finally approved in Costa Rica after so many years of not having received parliamentary treatment.

**The laureates will follow very closely
which actions the authorities will take.**

The signatories of the petition indicated that "to the extent of our possibilities, both we ⁽¹⁾ and the Córdoba and Valdivia Campus of the Right Livelihood College ⁽²⁾ will support, at the request of the indigenous communities of Costa Rica, the international dissemination of their struggles and rights, and make visible any serious threat that endangers their lives and property" ⁽³⁾.

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(1) LAUREATES THAT SIGN

Paul Walker, USA
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2013

Jacqueline Moudeina, Tchad
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2011

Pat Mooney, Canada
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1985

Maude Barlow, Canada
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2005

Sima Samar, Afghanistan
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2012

Martin von Hildebrand / COAMA, Colombia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1999

Daniel Ellsberg, USA
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2006

Fernando Funes Aguilar, Cuba
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1999

Fernando Rendón / Festival de Poesía de Medellín, Colombia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2006

P. K. Ravindran / KSSP, India
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1996

Nnimmo Bassey, Nigeria
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2010

Walden Bello, Philippines
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2003

Yetnebersh Nigussie, Ethiopia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2017

Stephen Corry / Survival International, UK
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1989

Juan Pablo Orrego S., Chile
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998

Anwar Fazal, Malaysia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1982

Manfred Max Neef, Chile
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1983

Raúl Montenegro, Argentina
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2004

L. Hunter Lovins, USA
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1983

Tony Rinaudo, Australia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2018

John F.C. Turner, UK
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1988

Khadija Ismayilova, Azerbaijan
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2017

Ruchama Marton, Israel
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2010

Johan Galtung, Norway
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1987

András Biró, Hungary
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1995

David Suzuki, Canada
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2009

Henk Hobbelink / GRAIN, Spain
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2011

Angie Zelter / Trident Ploughshares, UK
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2001

Martin Green, Australia
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2002

Bianca Jagger, Nicaragua
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2004

Annelies Allain, Director of IBFAN, Switzerland
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998

Elizabeth Sterken, Director of IBFAN, USA
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998

Marta Trejos. Director of IBFAN, Latin America and the Caribbean
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998

Marcos Arana / Coordinator of IBFAN, Latin America and the Caribbean
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998

Martin Almada, Paraguay
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2002

H. Sudarshan, India
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1994

Dipal Barua / Grameen Bank, Bangladesh
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2007

Theo van Boven, The Netherlands
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1985

Fernando Basil / AHRC, Hong Kong SAR, China
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2014

Helen Mack Chang, Guatemala
Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1992

(²) RLC CAMPUSES THAT SIGN

Campus Valdivia, Right Livelihood College, Chile
Universidad Austral, Chile
Manfred Max-Neef, Director

Campus Cordoba, Right Livelihood College, Argentina
Facultad de Psicología, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina

Raúl A. Montenegro, Director

(³) THE RIGHT LIVELIHOOD COLLEGE (RLC) AND ITS CAMPUSES.

The Right Livelihood College is a global capacity-building initiative of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation which bridges the gap between activists and academia. This network of nine universities and academic institutions across five continents aims to spread awareness about and further expand upon the pioneering work of the 'Alternative Nobel' Laureates.

The Right Livelihood College (RLC), the College of the Recipients of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize', has campuses in nine countries: University of Lund (Sweden), University of Bonn (Germany), University of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria), University of California Santa Cruz (USA), Austral University of Valdivia (Chile), National University of Córdoba (Argentina), Tata Institute of Social Sciences (India) and School of Welfare-University of Chulalongkorn (Thailand). Its Global Secretariat is located in Bonn (Germany).