

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000
www.aflcio.org

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Contact: Eddie Vale/Alison Omens – 202-637-5018

STATEMENT BY AFL-CIO PRESIDENT JOHN SWEENEY ON THE COUP IN HONDURAS June 30, 2009

The AFL-CIO stands in solidarity with our sister organizations of Honduras, the national trade union centrals -- the Unitary Central of Honduran Workers (CUTH), the Confederation of Honduran Workers (CTH) and the General Workers Central (CGT) -- as well as with the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), representing over 45 million workers of this hemisphere, in condemning the military coup that resulted in the illegal ouster of democratically-elected President Manuel Zelaya.

The AFL-CIO denounces this unconscionable attack on the fundamental rights and liberties of the Honduran people. The recent internal conflict relating to the proposed constitutional referendum cannot in any way justify the extra-constitutional measures undertaken by the armed forces, which were later ratified by the Honduran congress when it voted to depose President Zelaya and install Congressman Roberto Micheletti immediately following the coup. These measures are a flagrant violation of the most basic democratic principles and of the rule of law.

The AFL-CIO calls on the United States government and the international community, particularly the Organization of American States and the United Nations, not only to condemn the coup and withhold recognition of the current government, but to make every effort to help achieve the restitution of constitutional order and the reinstatement of the democratically elected president.

We have already received eyewitness reports that the thousands of people from civil society organizations, including trade unions, who assembled to demand that democratic order be restored and the president returned, have been tear-gassed by the armed forces. Several have been injured and dozens have been arrested. We call on the United States Government to also take all measures within its diplomatic powers to ensure that all Honduran civilians, and particularly trade unionists and social activists denouncing the coup, are safe and secure and will not be victimized by violence and repression.

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