

Presente!

Resistiendo el Imperio y la Militarización desde 1990 - Promoviendo una
Resisting Empire and Militarization since 1990 - Promoting a Culture

Honduras: Berta Cáceres Assassinated

When Berta Cáceres was assassinated on March 2, 2016 in Honduras, she was in the midst of an intense struggle in defense of the Gualcarque River, a sacred river for the Lenca people.

She was also a national leader denouncing the repressive Honduran regime and its turning over of Honduras' resources to corporations for the plundering of the country. Despite numerous death threats, as the General Coordinator of the Lenca organization COPINH and a leader with the Honduran social movements, Berta forcefully spoke out against the 2009 SOA graduate-led military coup and the resulting U.S.-backed regimes that unleashed repression against the Honduran people. She supported Lenca community

after Lenca community in defending their territories against an onslaught of mega-projects, dams, displacement, and mining projects being forcefully imposed by the post-coup regimes through militarization and violence.

The Honduran government had long tried

to silence Berta. For years she has received death threats, harassment, and surveillance. Then in 2014, she was detained by the Honduran military and later sent to

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Fuera Bases Militares de EEUU en América Latina

En octubre pasado, en el marco de una delegación de SOAW a Chile, activistas del movimiento realizaron una protesta fuera del Fuerte Aguayo, en Concon, donde el Comando Sur abrió una base militar la que fue inaugurada por el embajador de EEUU en Chile.

El fundador de SOAW, Roy Bourgeois, señaló en la manifestación que era hora de terminar con el entrenamiento en la Escuela de las Américas como en cualquier base militar de EEUU en América Latina, dijo que "la gente no necesita armas, necesita alimentos, educación, salud, hogar".

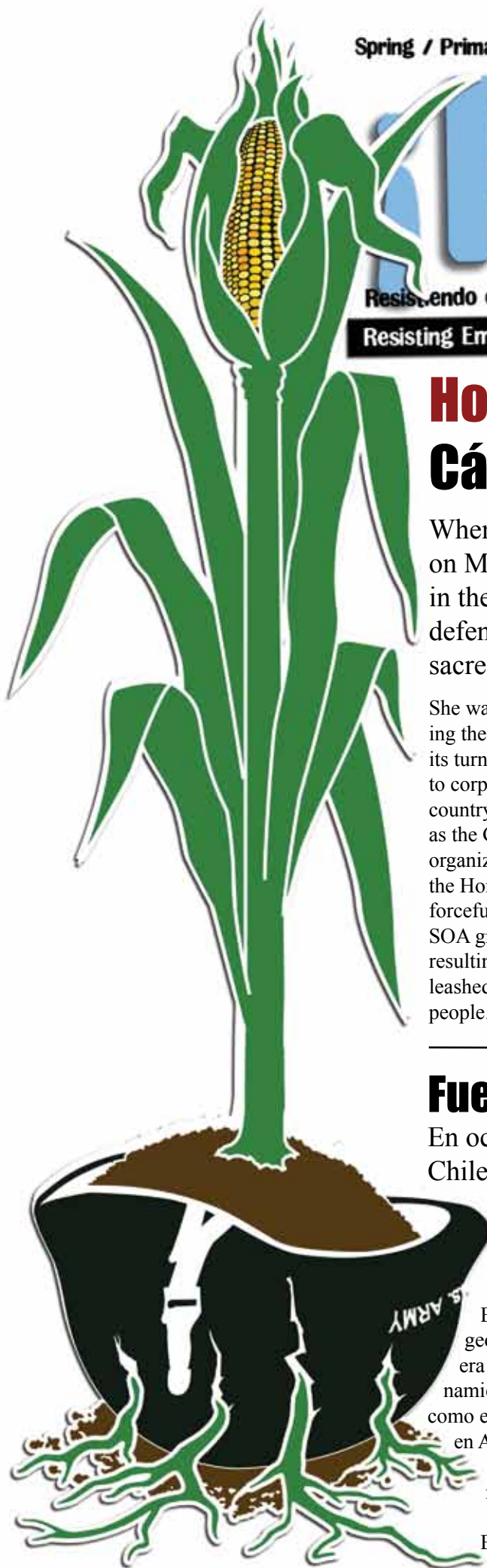
En noviembre, en el mismo sentido,

Alicia Lira, presidenta de la Agrupación de Familiares de Ejecutados Políticos en Chile, con el apoyo de SOAW, viajó a Cuba para participar en el IV Seminario Internacional de Paz y por la Abolición de las Bases Militares Extranjeras.

Finalmente, en diciembre del 2015, el Observatorio por el Cierre de la Escuela



de las Américas en Chile entregó una carta al embajador de EEUU, Michael Hammer, pidiendo que devuelvan Guantánamo a Cuba.



Exposed: FBI Surveillance of SOA Watch

For at least a decade, the FBI, through local law enforcement, abused its counter-terrorism authority to conduct a widespread surveillance and monitoring operation against School of Americas Watch (SOAW); a nonviolent activist organization founded by pacifists working to close the School of the Americas, later renamed the Western Hemisphere for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC).

The lawyers from the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund (PCJF) obtained the 429 pages of redacted documents from the FBI’s Field Office in Atlanta on behalf of SOA Watch. In the 10 years of redacted documents, the FBI repeatedly admitted to SOAW’s “peaceful intentions.” Regardless of this acknowledgement, the FBI continued to monitor for the potential of “more aggressive protest participants,” “factions of a radical cell,” and/or other pre-textual alarmist warnings to justify spying on protected First Amendment political activity.

Read the FBI files here:
SOAW.org/fbi

The uncovered documents show the bureau continued to deploy its Domestic Intelligence Terrorism Squad to monitor activity within the organization using Confidential Informants inside the movement to gather information. In addition, the FBI’s headquarters and counter-

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Dear Reader,
Thank you for your interest in the reality of U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America, and for seeking out more information about the work to push back violence and militarization. As this issue of Presente goes to print, our hearts are heavy. The assassination of our dear friend and comrade Berta Cáceres, and the increased repression against social movement groups, have left us shocked and saddened. SOA Watch Latin America

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liaison Brigitte Gynther traveled to Honduras the morning after she learned about the assassination and has been coordinating SOA Watch’s response together with our partner groups on the ground. If you do not already receive Urgent Action emails from SOA Watch, please visit SOAW.org and sign up now.

The recent decision by the U.S. judge in North Carolina to extradite one of the perpetrators of the 1989 massacre at the University of San Salvador gives us hope that justice will prevail in the end.

It will take all of us to create change!
Please join us as we mobilize to the U.S./ Mexico border from October 7-10, 2016!

Planned Giving & Charitable Bequests

Leave a meaningful legacy at SOA Watch through planned giving. As you begin the process of planning your gift, you have a number of options. Visit SOAW.org/bequest or call Katherine Henao at 202-234-3440 for more information. Here’s the story of one of SOA Watch’s supporters, who has included SOA Watch into her will:

“It was in the 1980s that I first lived with torture survivors, in Paraguay under the Stroessner dictatorship. It was there that I realized how damaging torture is, not only to the survivors but to their families and children. Twenty years later, the great Paraguayan lawyer and teacher of justice, Dr. Martin Almada, would repeatedly insist to me that SOA Watch must not only close the SOA/WHINSEC, but also turn it into a school for human rights and ecology that will continue teaching peace and genuine security for decades to come. “But Professor Martin! We are working so hard to simply close it and to make the SOA’s history transparent!” “Pero mi hija, you must do both! So that such a school never re-opens again. For the children of now and the children of the future.”

It is now 2016 and I have been writing my first legal will. Although I feel young and healthy, I am putting SOA Watch in my will, to make sure that the work of teaching peace continues into the next generation, when the SOA/WHINSEC is finally closed. For the children of now and the children of the future.”



- Theresa Cameranesi, SOA Watch Council



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*“The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.”
 - Martin Luther King Jr.*

SOA Grads Responsible For 1989 Jesuit Massacre Face Extradition, Military Officers Arrested in El Salvador

The 1989 massacre of 16-year-old Celina Ramos, her mother Elba Ramos, and six Jesuit priests in El Salvador, that galvanized opposition to the U.S. relationship with Central American death squads and that sparked the movement to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas, is making headlines again.

On February 5, 2016, a U.S. judge in North Carolina cleared the way for SOA graduate and retired Salvadoran Colonel, Inocente Orlando Montano, to be extradited to face charges in Spain. Col. Montano was trained by the U.S. military at the School of the Americas in 1970.


On February 6, 2016, El Salvador's police announced that four ex-soldiers, who were also involved in the massacre, were arrested at the behest of Interpol in an operation that began the night before.

The four former military officers arrested in El Salvador are Col. Guillermo Alfredo Benavides Moreno, Sargent Tomás Zarpate Castillo, Sargent Ramiro Ávalos Vargas, and Corporal Angel Perez Vasquez. Avalos Vargas and Ángel Pérez Vásquez attended the Small Unit Training and Management course at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1988 and 1987 respectively, before participating in the brutal 1989 massacre. El Salvador's Supreme Court is expected to rule on their extraditions to Spain. Twelve other former Salvadoran soldiers

greatly MISSED
Celina Maricet Ramos

Age: 16 years old
 Country: El Salvador
 Status: Killed on Nov. 16, 1989


On the night of November 16, 1989, a Salvadoran Army patrol entered the University of Central America in San Salvador and massacred 16-year old Celina Ramos, her mother Elba and six Jesuit priests. Nineteen of the twenty-six military officers cited for this atrocity have received training at the School of the Americas.



The School of the Americas (SOA)
 is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers, located at Fort Benning, Georgia. In 2001 it was renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC).

Since 1946, the SOA has trained over 70,000 Latin American soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare. Training manuals used at the school for at least a decade, advocated the use of torture, extortion and execution. Graduates of the school continue to use their skills to wage a war against their own people.

To learn more and to take action, contact SOA Watch
 (202) 234 3440 **soaw.org**



Download this poster at SOAW.org/posters

with international warrants in connection with the UCA massacre remain at large, and it is unknown whether they are in El Salvador or have fled the country.

We celebrate the arrests of the perpetrators in El Salvador, and the decision to grant the extradition of SOA graduate Inocente Orlando Montano to stand trial

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Colombia: El deshonroso primer lugar

Por Pablo Ruiz, Coordinador para América Latina de SOAW

El pasado 16 de enero fue asesinada por “desconocidos” la defensora de derechos humanos Nelly Amaya, integrante de la Asociación Campesina del Catatumbo, departamento Norte de Santander, en Colombia.

De acuerdo al informe de ‘Front Line Defenders’, entre enero y noviembre de 2015, fueron asesinados en Colombia 54 defensores de derechos humanos lo que marca un aumento frente a los 47 asesinatos informados durante el 2014, y que posiciona a Colombia, por segundo año consecutivo, en el deshonroso primer lugar de las naciones más peligrosas para el ejercicio de la defensa de los derechos humanos.

Colombia es el país que mas

soldados envía a la SOA para su entrenamiento en la Escuela de las Américas. Estamos hablando que más del 50% de todos los “estudiantes”, de los últimos años, son de origen colombiano, según las cifras oficiales de las que disponemos. Solo durante el 2012 fueron entrenados 1051 soldados colombianos, 798 el año siguiente y fueron 915 el año 2014.

La organización Human Right Watch en su informe del año 2015 sobre Colombia, encontró

que sobre 11 Brigadas militares había “evidencias de responsabilidad de generales y coroneles del Ejército colombiano por ejecuciones de civiles”. Lo que se conoce como “falsos positivos” donde militares colombianos secuestran a civiles, los asesinan, y después hacen aparecer como guerrilleros “muertos en combate”.

Otra manera de operar en Colombia ha sido la utilización de grupos paramilitares y sicarios, para los mismos objetivos, como

son el amedrentamiento y asesinato de civiles defensores de los derechos humanos”

De acuerdo al informe “¡Basta ya! Colombia: memorias de guerra y dignidad”, que aborda desde 1958 a 2012, han sido asesinados en Colombia 220 mil personas, 25 mil se encuentran desaparecidas, y más de cinco millones se han visto obligadas al desplazamiento forzado.

Por todo lo anterior, SOA Watch seguirá poniendo atención sobre Colombia y este año Brigitte Gynther y otros activistas de SOAW estarán acompañando a la Comisión

Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz quienes realizarán una caminata por la paz en conmemoración del aniversario de la “Operación Génesis”.



21st Century Border: The Militarization of the Border and the Militarization of Mexico

by Eduardo García

Over the last nine years, around 185,000 people have been murdered in Mexico and more than 23,000 have been reported as disappeared. It's also been nine years since the Mexican government, under Felipe Calderon, decided to embroil the country in a war against drug cartels with the support of the United States. Cooperation between the two countries was made official through the Merida Initiative, decreed in 2008. Designed to resemble Plan Colombia, Merida has 4 pillars: interrupting the operations of organized crime; strengthening the rule of law through judicial and police reform; the strengthening of communities; and the creation of a "21st Century Border."

Although the government's language is particularly vague on this, it seems like a "21st Century Border" simply means more militarization.

The border that divides Mexico from Central America has become the new southern border of the United States. With the expansion of the border zone, militarization as a border strategy has expanded as well. Plan Frontera Sur, put into place by the Mexican government

in 2014, has constructed a new vertical border that runs from south to north through the country. This vertical border is designed as a series of "filters," through immigration checkpoints and militarized training for Mexican police and border agents, that helps to reduce the number of migrants, who will make it to the U.S.-Mexico border.

The results of Plan Merida for all of us who live south of the Rio Grande have not been what was promised.



Cristina Bautista Salvador holds a photo of her son, Benjamin Ascencio Bautista. Accompanied by her brother, she marched with the families of the other 42 students from Ayotzinapa and thousands more.



A group of more than 1200 Central Americans marched in Mexico City to demand an end to the violence against undocumented migrants in the region. Two months earlier, Enrique Peña Nieto's administration announced the creation of Plan Frontera Sur.

The collusion between organized crime and the Mexican government has become more evident than ever. The disappearance of the 43 students in Ayotzinapa is just the most infamous case among thousands of similar instances of repression. Mexico's rate of impunity is the second highest in the world, where 98% of cases involving human rights violations go unresolved. The most recent Mexican Children and Youth Survey showed that at least 26 thousand minors between the ages of 10 and 13 have been forced to work with organized crime.

The strategy of militarizing Mexico is part of a border security plan pushed by the United States in the name of homeland security. Between 2008 and 2014 more than 22 thousand State and Federal Mexican police were trained by the United States, to then be sent to the streets and take charge of the war against the drug cartels. We don't know how many more militarized Mexican immigration agents have been trained by the United States through Plan Merida. Along with the Mexican people, hundreds of thousands of Central Americans who have fled (often US-backed) violence in their home countries are suffering the consequences of this "Twenty-First Century Border."

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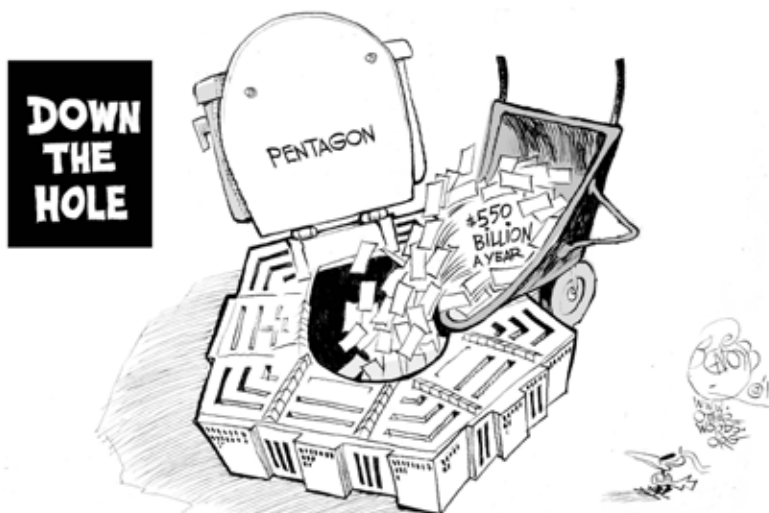


First U.S. Border Patrol Agent Trained at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation

The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC, formerly known as the School of the Americas), announced that Border Patrol Agent Adalberto Rodriguez was the first U.S. Border Patrol agent to be trained at the institute.

According to the WHINSEC's PR spokesperson, Rodriguez was sent to WHINSEC by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) with the expressed purpose "to gain first-hand knowledge of courses developed and instructed by WHINSEC, and to develop a working relationship between WHINSEC and CBP."

The connection between WHINSEC, the military training school, which has a track record of graduating human rights abusers, and the U.S. Border Patrol is chilling. The institute's role has been to instill a mindset into Latin American security forces that promotes "military solutions" to social problems. The U.S. Border Patrol already has a serious problem when it comes to the use of excessive force, their culture of impunity, and treating border communities as war zones. Military training at one of the most notorious military training institutions is very much a step in the wrong direction.



The Expanding Geography of Training Mexico's Police and Soldiers

by John Lindsay-Poland, AFSC

The United States gave military training to more than 5,700 Mexican police and soldiers in some 45 U.S. locations and at least ten sites in Mexico during the last two years, according to data published by the State Department.

The training ranged from jungle riverine exercises at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi and desert operations at Fort Bliss in El Paso, to helicopter pilot training at Fort Rucker, Alabama and maritime policing in the U.S. Coast Guard's training center in Yorktown, Virginia. Some U.S. training sites train very few foreign students, often just one or two per country.

Most U.S. military training for Mexican armed forces occurred in Mexico, not the United States. More than half occurred in three locations: Campeche on the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico City, and the southern border city of Tapachula.

U.S. Marines gave pre-deployment training to most of more than 900 Mexican Marines in Tapachula in 2014. Marines have been training Mexican soldiers in both Mexico and U.S. sites since October 2012, according to Marine Corp Times. U.S. Border Patrol trainers also instructed 30 Mexican naval forces on doing vehicle stops at a course in Tapachula.

At San Miguel de Jagueyos, 55 miles north of Mexico City, U.S. Army North instructors trained more than 300 Mexican soldiers in rifle marksmanship, urban operations, and combat casualty

care in the Spring and Summer of 2014. US Army North reports it is creating a long-term strategy for U.S.-Mexico military activities, which it calls Theater Security Cooperation. The military training base in San Miguel Jagueyos was the site of executions by the Army in 1988, according to testimony by a deserter who requested asylum in Canada.

The military training base in San Miguel Jagueyos was the site of executions by the Army in 1988, according to testimony by a deserter who requested asylum in Canada.

The map below shows mostly but not entirely military training. Congress requires U.S. agencies to report annually on military train-

ing of foreign forces, but there has been no legal requirement to report on foreign police training. But in Mexico as in Central America, police and other law enforcement agencies have been primarily responsible for operations against the drugs and immigration that are Washington's highest priority.

The Mexican presidency recently reported that the United States supported the training of 19,473 agents of Mexico's immigration enforcement agency (National Migration Institute, or INM) in interrogation of terrorism suspects, relations with the public, interview techniques, and other subjects. But since the INM has only 5,400 agents, the number likely includes members of other Mexican police forces as well as multiple courses for some agents. Federal Police agents frequently work together with INM.

Not included in this data and map is training of Mexican forces conducted by Colombian trainers, even when this was financed by the United States. According to the Colombian government, the country's national police trained 10,310 Mexican police between 2009 and 2013. Mexico has been the largest recipient of Colombian military and police training, but this is largely an agreement between Colombia and Mexico.



Converge on the U.S./Mexico Border this Fall!

From the SOA to the Border

This October 7-10 join us in Nogales, Arizona for a bi-national convergence at the U.S./Mexico border to demand a fundamental shift in U.S. foreign policy.

At a time when refugees who are fleeing U.S.-sponsored violence are being branded as criminals, rapists and terrorists, and as anti-immigrant rhetoric continues to poison the public discourse in this election year, it is important for people of conscience to take a stand and to offer a different narrative.

As politicians build walls, we must build bridges.

We need to build grassroots power to challenge the racist status quo and we need to take action. Immigration has been the biggest issue so far in the 2016 presidential election campaign, yet every major candidate has remained silent about the connections between militarized U.S.

foreign policy and the reasons why people flee here for their lives.

Instead of welcoming refugees as required under international humanitarian standards, they are treated as criminals and imprisoned for profit in the U.S. Moreover, the U.S. "solution" to the so-called child migrant crisis has been to further militarize the borders of Mexico and Central America. Mexico now deports more Central Americans than the U.S. does - with our tax dollars. **Enough is enough! We must answer the call to solidarity, speak truth to power, and demand an end to the current manifestations of U.S. violence in Latin America and beyond!**

Beginning in the Spring of 2015, we began a discussion focused on moving the annual vigil to the U.S./Mexico border in order to expand our focus and shine a light on the many human rights violations caused by destructive U.S. foreign policy that the SOA represents. In the months that followed, we began an engaging and intentional series of conversations within our movement, as well as with partner organizations. In the month prior to last year's vigil, we embarked on a listening tour to consult with communities and organizers on the front lines of resistance along the U.S./Mexico border and were able to come to a consensus - SOA Watch needs to move to the border!

The SOA Watch movement began as a response to what was happening in El Salvador in the

1980's when many people joined the solidarity movement. The patterns of violence and forced migration established during the dirty wars of the 20th century have continued unabated as a direct result of U.S. economic and security policies in Mesoamerica as well as the U.S.-led Drug War. How do we respond to this current reality in the same way we responded to the violence in the 1980's? Where should our energies lie?

This year's vigil in Nogales is a response to the present-day call to solidarity.

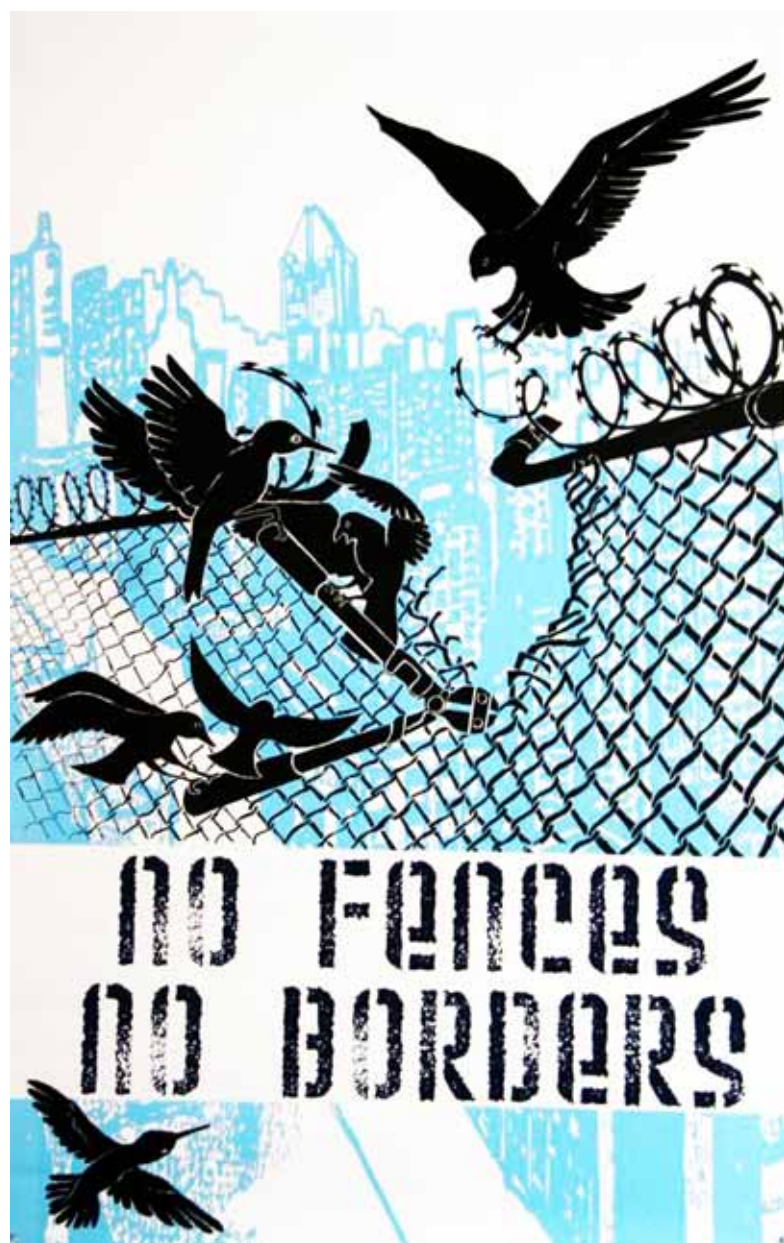
The border mobilization in Nogales is one more way to fight for the closure of the School of the Americas, and to work towards a world that is free of suffering and violence. We

cannot forget that many of our immigrant brothers and sisters are survivors of U.S.-sponsored atrocities in Latin America. In calling attention to the militarization of the border, we continue to demand an end to state-sponsored terrorism and violence against our communities on both sides of the border.

Join us! Organize your community to join human rights activists, torture survivors, union workers, veterans, community organizers, migrants, faith communities, students and educators from across the Americas.

Begin making travel plans! For questions about mobilizing yourself and others please call 202-234-3440 or visit

SOAW.org/border



Let's Practice Direct Action

When the call went out for articles to include in the Spring Presente, I proposed we make a space for an ongoing discussion of Nonviolent Direct Action (NVDA) in each edition.

We find plenty of discourse in previous SOA Watch publications. You can search the history of SOA Watch on our website and find many examples of meaningful actions taken, both here and abroad, to pressure the government to close this assassins' training school. But generally, except for those in court for any Civil Disobedience performed during the Vigil, very little is noted the rest of the year until coordinators start wondering, who will be doing the trainings at next year's Vigil? Since we're upping the ante a bit in 2016 by mobilizing to converge on the US/Mexican border, and encouraging involvement in NVDA, we're hoping to create a regular column for an ongoing discussion of Direct Action and work to "de-mystify" what it means to engage in it.

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1989 University of Central America Massacre SOA Graduates Face Extradition

Continued from Page 3

in Spain. SOA Watch also maintains that the U.S. officials who conspired with the Salvadoran military, and who are responsible for the training and funding of the death squads must be held to account as well.



The '89 massacre of 16-year-old Celina Ramos, her mother Elba Ramos, and six Jesuit priests at the University of Central America (UCA) in El Salvador, galvanized opposition to the U.S. relationship with Central American death squads and sparked the movement to close the SOA.

us that the School of the Americas is more than just a tool of war. The School of the Americas is a tool of domination that engulfs economies, electoral processes, resources, and communities. It fractures, breaks, steals and sends its victims on long journeys to the borders that scar the lands of North and South.

The martyrs teach us the power of solidarity. They remind us that the beloved community emerges from a struggle that has no guarantees and is nourished by a desire that dares to name its vision. Today, the people of the Americas are facing a crisis – a migrant crisis – whose root cause traces back to the SOA. A deepening of solidarity calls us to journey to the border

and journey with the migrants.

As a social movement organization with roots on both sides of the border, we ask you to join us, as we broaden the path we have journeyed, to include the School and the border. Come with us to the U.S./Mexico border from October 7-10, 2016.

Let's build our collective imagination as an antidote to empire in our voices, our songs, our direct action, our legislation, our Vigil, our Puppetistas and our hearts.

The journey of SOA Watch is closely tied to the lives of 16-year-old Celina Ramos, her mother Elba Ramos, and Jesuit priest dissidents Ignacio Ellacuría, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Segundo Montes, Juan Ramón Moreno, Joaquín López y López, and Amando López. The first SOA Watch vigil took place in 1990 on the anniversary of the massacre. We have been accompanied by the many who became ancestors before their time, drawing from their courage and continuing their resistance. **We have been uplifted, educated, inspired, and humbled by the movements of the Americas as we have fought together against coups, trade agreements, environmental devastation, military training, and human rights violations.**

Along the way our sacred story, the story of Celina, Elba and the Jesuits has deepened and broadened. It has become the story of the torture survivor, the displaced campesino, the threatened union worker, the refugee and the migrant. The stories of all those who suffer at the hands of the school has taught

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You can terminate your recurring donation at any time by contacting SOA Watch at 202-234-3440 or kat@soaw.org.

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the U.S./Mexico Border

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¡Este otoño acudamos a la frontera entre EE.UU. y México!

Desde la Escuela de las Américas hasta la frontera

Ven y únete con nosotros el 7-10 de octubre en Nogales, Arizona, para que hagamos una convergencia bi-nacional en la frontera de Estados Unidos y México, con el fin de exigir un cambio fundamental en la política exterior de los EE.UU.

En un momento como el actual en el que los refugiados que huyen de la violencia patrocinada por los Estados Unidos son tildados de criminales, violadores y terroristas, y a medida que la retórica contra los inmigrantes continúa envenenando el debate público durante este año de elecciones, es importante que la gente con conciencia nos pongamos de pie y ofrezcamos una narrativa diferente.

Mientras los políticos construye muros, nosotros debemos construir puentes.

Necesitamos fortalecer el poder de las bases para lograr desafiar el status quo racista, y necesitamos emprender la acción. Hasta

ahora, la inmigración ha sido la cuestión más candente durante la campaña presidencial de 2016, y sin embargo, todo candidato principal ha guardado silencio en torno a las conexiones entre la política exterior militarizada de EE.UU., y los motivos por los cuales la gente de Latinoamérica se ve obligada a huir a EE.UU. para salvar sus vidas.

En lugar de acoger a los refugiados, como lo requieren los estándares humanitarios internacionales, estas personas son tratadas como criminales, y encerradas en prisiones para la ganancia económica de corporaciones privadas. De hecho, la “solución” a la llamada crisis de la migración infantil ha sido mil-

itarizar todavía más las fronteras entre México y América Central. Hoy en día, México deporta más centroamericanos que Estados Unidos mismo... y estos abusos en México son pagados con los impuestos de los que viven en EE.UU. **¡Ya Basta! ¡Debemos responder a la llamada de la solidaridad, confrontar al poder con la verdad, y exigir que Estados Unidos cese las actuales manifestaciones de violencia en América Latina y más allá del continente!**

Al comienzo la primavera 2015 vimos como podríamos trasladar nuestra vigilia anual a la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México, para ampliar nuestro alcance y dejar al desubierto las numerosas

violaciones a los derechos humanos causadas por la destructiva política exterior de los Estados Unidos, representada por la SOA. En los meses que siguieron, emprendimos una serie de conversaciones deliberadas y apasionadas, tanto al interior de nuestro movimiento como con otras organizaciones contraparte. El mes anterior a la vigilia del año pasado, nos embarcamos en una gira con el fin de escuchar, y hacer una consulta con las comunidades y organizadores en las líneas de vanguardia de la resistencia, ubicadas a lo largo de la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México. Y así logramos alcanzar un consenso - ¡SOA Watch debía trasladarse a la frontera!

El movimiento SOA Watch surgió como una respuesta a lo que ocurría en El Salvador durante la década de los ochenta. Muchas personas se unieron entonces a este movimiento solidario. Los patrones de la violencia y migración forzosa establecidos durante las guerras sucias del Siglo Veinte han continuado sin tregua, como resultado directo de las políticas económicas y de seguridad que adelantan los Estados Unidos en Mesoamérica, así como de la guerra contra las drogas liderada por este país. ¿Cómo podemos nosotros responder a la realidad de ahora, de la misma manera como respondimos a la violencia de los años ochenta? ¿En qué

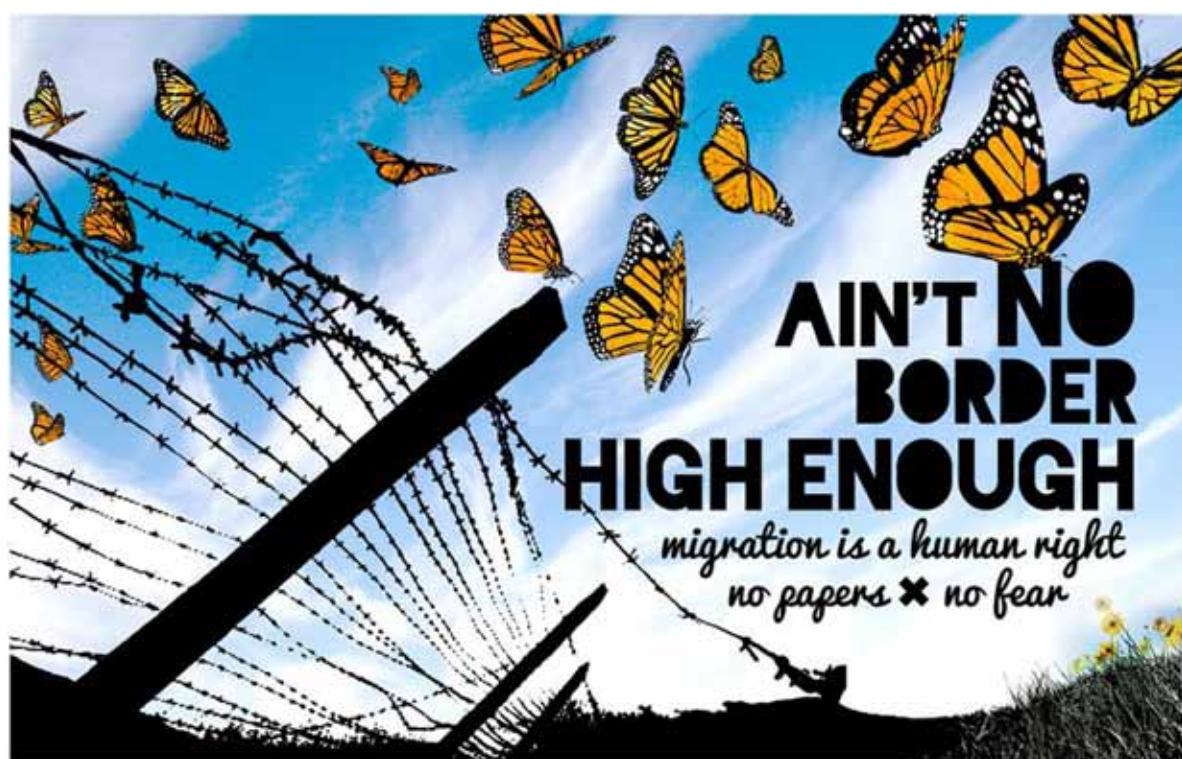
debemos invertir mejor nuestras energías?

La vigilia de este año en Nogales es una respuesta al llamado a la solidaridad que suscita el momento actual.

La movilización a la frontera en Nogales es una forma más de luchar por el cierre de la Escuela de las Américas, y de trabajar hacia un mundo libre de sufrimiento y violencia. No podemos olvidar que muchos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas son sobrevivientes de la atrocidades que Estados Unidos ha ido patrocinando en América Latina. Llamando la atención sobre la militarización de la frontera, seguimos exigiendo acabar con el terrorismo y la violencia de Estado contra nuestras comunidades a lado y lado de la frontera.

¡Únete a nosotros! Organiza a tu comunidad para que confluir con activistas de los derechos humanos, sobrevivientes de la tortura, sindicalistas, veteranos de guerra, trabajadores comunitarios, migrantes, comunidades de la fe, estudiantes y educadores de todos los rincones de las Américas.

Para preguntar cómo pueden movilizarte tú y los demás, por favor llámanos al 202-234-3440 o haznos una visita. SOAW.org



Exposed: FBI Surveillance of School of the Americas Watch

Continued from Page 2

terrorism units were requested to provide the FBI's Field Office in Atlanta with "all intelligence relevant to the SOA, so that this information can be provided to local/military law enforcement agencies." The vague, unspecified threat of future violence functioned as the annual excuse for the surveillance of peaceful dissent.

"This unconscionable abuse by the FBI to use its counter-terrorism authority against peaceful political movements – from SOAW, to Occupy, to Black Lives Matter — makes it clear that the FBI cannot be its own watchdog, nor self-regulate. It is time for there to be legislatively enacted prohibitions on the FBI's use of domestic terrorism authority against peaceful protest and First Amendment-protected free speech activities in the United States," said Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, the Executive Director of the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund.

The FBI's pattern of unwarranted surveillance, allusions to violence, and subsequent reports of peaceful activity continued for years. From 2000 through 2009, undercover agents and Confidential Informants consistently reported that SOAW organized protests and vigils were "uneventful," "never expressed or exhibited a propensity for violence," and that "there has never been any significant incident of violence or widespread property damage." FOIA documents ultimately conclude that the demonstrations could comparatively be described as a "street festival." These documents once again reveal the true role of the FBI functioning as a political surveillance and intelligence operation that uses domestic terrorism authority against peaceful protesters and organizations.

SOA Watch activists across the Americas are not intimidated, and will continue to speak out against repressive U.S. policies, and to engage in nonviolent direct action.



Follow Eric J Garcia at garciaink@twitter or friend Eric J Garcia on facebook.

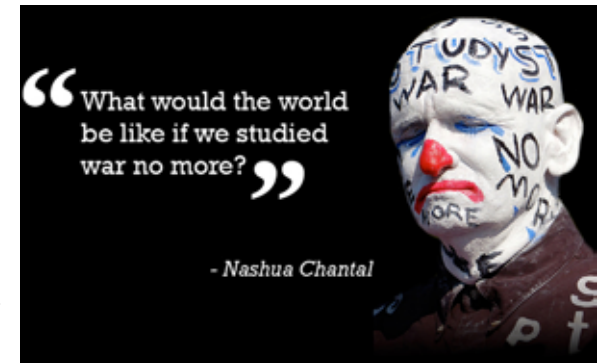
Let's Practice Direct Action

Continued from Page 6

There are many informed people in this movement who have contributed their time and expertise to prepare folks who wish to engage in NVDA. Since the earliest gatherings to close the SOA/WHINSEC more than 300 people have collectively served more than 100 years in prison and 53.5 years of probation and home confinement for their acts of Civil Disobedience during the Vigils.

Although I've studied, attended as well as organized trainings, and have participated in NVDA, I am by no means an expert or scholar on the subject. As a Southern Human Rights Organizer and war resister, I've spoken with plenty of people across the South who've heard about Direct Action and, unfortunately, have a default position that all it means is to get arrested for some principled position. Au contraire! There is so much more. (see *198 Methods of Nonviolent Direct Action*) Maybe we could begin with some definitions of NVDA by actual experts and notables in the field such as Martin Luther King, Jr. writing from the Birmingham, Alabama jail: "Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored". If we had the space, we could pick dozens of quotes from others starting with Aristotle's "It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen."

As we consider what to present in this column, remember that King read Gandhi who read Tolstoy and they all read Thoreau. Nonviolent direct action is a timeless ideal and revolutionary practice. A modern day hero of mine who has influenced popular uprisings around the world is Nobel Peace Prize nominee and political theorist Gene Sharp, described as the world's foremost scholar on nonviolent revolution. I think his definition is a great one to think about: "Nonviolent action is a means of combat, as is war. It



involves the matching of forces and the waging of 'battle,' requires wise strategy and tactics and demands of its 'soldiers' courage, discipline and sacrifice. This view of nonviolent action as a technique of active combat is diametrically opposed to the popular assumption that, at its strongest, nonviolent action relies on rational persuasion of the opponent, and more commonly it consists simply of passive submission. Nonviolent action is just what it says- action which is nonviolent, not inaction. This technique consists, not simply of words, but of active Protest, Noncooperation, and Intervention. Overwhelmingly, it is a group or mass action."

Did you notice that 'Intervention' (ie. civil disobedience), is just a part of an overall strategy? There's a lot to do before risking arrest. If you have questions, comments, ideas, or examples of nonviolent direct actions taken by you, your community, or others email them to me at newsouthnetwork@gmail.com. We'll pick some to discuss on the SOAW web site and in this column.

Coleman Smith lives in Asheville, N.C. and is a member of the SOAW Puppetista Collective, a Field Organizer with the New South Network of War Resisters, and member of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee Admin-Com. Reach him at the email above or at 828.301.6683

Spring Days of Action 2016 in Washington, DC

Latin American Resistance & U.S. Solidarity

Latin America has a 500 year history of resistance to the violence of colonialism, militarization, and elite domination. It is a legacy to treasure and honor. But we must also recognize that the current situation in some countries in Latin America, especially Mexico and Central America, is grim and requires urgent solidarity from those that live in the U.S., where our tax money is being utilized to prop up the forces of oppression.

Solidarity requires us to demand that our taxes not be utilized for the endless violence of the Drug War. When U.S. officials fail to do their job we must expose them and their role in the military industrial congressional complex. At last year's Spring Days of Action in DC, we created music & art, strategized, proposed a Border/Root Causes of Migration mobilization, and took our protest and solidarity to the halls of Congress. Our work at the Spring Days and beyond reverberated, with Congress being forced to cut some of the military aid it was providing Mexico, while only some parts of the deceptively named Alli-

ance for Prosperity in Central America or Biden Plan were approved. These victories need to be recognized and we need to realize that an organized people CAN make a difference so the only answer is to KEEP PUSHING.

Following up on our Victories

Our work last year in DC and in Congress isn't finished! Join us in DC this April 14 - 18 for 5 days of protest, lobbying, workshops, art, and community-building. We need to reject apathy, organize from below, and try

everything in our power to stop the violence of that is destroying Central America and Mexico. The failed policies emanating from Congress and the Pentagon have real consequences, with forced migration, enforced disappearances, and assassinations like the recent killing of Berta Cáceres in Honduras, becoming all too normalized. Nevertheless the resistance in Latin America to the violence is growing, the facade of the Drug War is crumbling, and we must continue to march towards the light and help usher in a new world.

This year we again recognize the power of solidarity and struggle,

including the welcoming of the Peace, Life, and Justice Caravan that will be arriving in Washington DC April 15 to report on their journey through Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and the U.S. to expose the Drug War's devastating impacts. We will also take our next steps in the campaign to pressure Vice President Joe Biden for an Executive Order to close the SOA before he and President Obama leave office early next year. In the meantime you can sign the petition to VP Biden at soaw.org/biden

Border/Root Causes of Migration Mobilization

This year's Spring Days are also an exciting opportunity to plug into SOA Watch's move to the

border and growing focus on the root causes of migration. The first Border/Root Causes of Migration Mobilization in Nogales, AZ, will be held on October 7-10, 2016, and we want to hear from you at the Spring Days as to how together we can make this an extraordinary event.

The Spring Days of Action are a crucial time for movement builders to change the conversation in DC from one of intervention and imperialism to one of sovereignty and dignity. Through song, dance, cheers and conversation, we will make a greater impact than if we work alone. That is why it is so important for as many people to come out as possible. We need your participation to make change happen!

April 14-18: DC Schedule of Events

Thursday 4/14

- Welcome to the Belly of the Beast Social

Friday 4/15

- Lobby/Advocacy Workshop
- Lobby visits
- Dance Party!!

Saturday 4/16

- Biden Campaign workshop
- Event with Peace, Life, & Justice Caravan arriving in DC from Latin America
- Potluck and Movie Screening

Sunday 4/17

- Lobby/Advocacy Workshop (for those that miss Friday's session)
- Discussion/Strategy Session on Root Causes of Migration & 2016 Border Mobilization
- Drum, banner, and sign making
- Social gathering at Haydee's in Mt. Pleasant

Monday 4/18

- ACTION in Honor of Berta Cáceres
- Lobby visits & packet drops on Capitol Hill
- Congress Call-In Day



SOA Watch Protest in Senator Marco Rubio's office in April 2015 Photo by Hendrik Voss

Una frontera del siglo XXI por Eduardo García

Durante los últimos nueve años, cerca de 185 mil personas han sido asesinadas en México y más de 23 mil han sido reportadas como desaparecidas. También han pasado nueve años desde que el gobierno mexicano, entonces encabezado por Felipe Calderón, decidió enrolar al país en una Guerra contra el Narcotráfico. El apoyo de Estados Unidos no se hizo esperar. A través de la Iniciativa Mérida ambos países dieron inicio a una etapa de cooperación que tendría como ejes la interrupción de las capacidades operativas del crimen organizado, la institucionalización y procuración del Estado de Derecho, el fortalecimiento de las comunidades y la creación de una estructura fronteriza del Siglo XXI.

Parece que, aunque el lenguaje es vago, una frontera del siglo XXI significa simplemente una frontera más militarizada.

El Río Suchiate y la línea que divide a México con Centroamérica se han convertido en la nueva frontera sur de los EEUU. Con la expansión de la frontera se expandieron también sus estrategias de militarización. La creación del Plan Frontera Sur,

implementado por el gobierno mexicano en 2014, visibilizó la creación de una frontera vertical que recorre el país de sur a norte. Esta nueva dinámica contempla instalación de filtros, a partir de la implementación de retenes y entrenamiento militarizado a agentes mexicanos, que ayuden a reducir el flujo migratorio, mayoritariamente centroamericano, que llega a los estados sureños de los EEUU.

Los resultados para quienes viven al sur del Río Bravo no han sido los esperados.

Cada vez se hace más evidente la colusión entre el crimen organizado y el Estado mexicano. La desaparición de 43 estudiantes

de Ayotzinapa le dio un nuevo nombre a las políticas de represión gubernamentales y puso luz a los miles de casos de personas desaparecidas que habían sido silenciados. México ha sido ubicado como el segundo país con el mayor índice de impunidad, donde el 98 por ciento de los casos de violaciones a los derechos humanos no se resuelven. La más reciente Consulta Infantil y Juvenil mexicana arrojó



Cada 10 de mayo las madres y familiares de personas desaparecidas de distintas regiones de México se reúnen en el Distrito Federal para exigir la aparición con vida de sus seres queridos.

que al menos 26 mil menores de entre 10 y 13 años han sido obligados a formar parte de algún grupo del crimen organizado.

Entre 2008 y 2014 más de 22 mil oficiales policiales estatales y federales mexicanos fueron entrenados por los Estados Unidos para después ser enviados a las calles y encabezar la Guerra contra el Narcotráfico. Los primeros en sufrir las consecuencias han sido el pueblo mexicano y cientos de miles de personas centroamericanas que dejaron sus países huyendo de distintas violencias. La estrategia de militarización de México es parte de la estrategia de seguridad de las fronteras emprendida por los Estados Unidos en nombre de su seguridad interna. De no ver esta situación, programas como la Iniciativa Mérida o la Alianza para la Prosperidad en Centroamérica seguirán reproduciéndose.

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- Esta cifra no incluye a los elementos del ejército, de la marina, o de migración, por ejemplo, que han recibido algún tipo de instrucción en el país vecino.



Cerca de mil migrantes centroamericanos descansan en Villahermosa, Tabasco, antes de continuar su camino hacia el Distrito Federal. El contingente de más de mil 500 personas, entre migrantes, activistas y gente solidaria, buscaba exigir un fin a la violencia en contra de las personas indocumentadas en la región. Los gobiernos de México y EEUU respondieron meses después con la creación del Plan Frontera Sur.

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Repression in Honduras

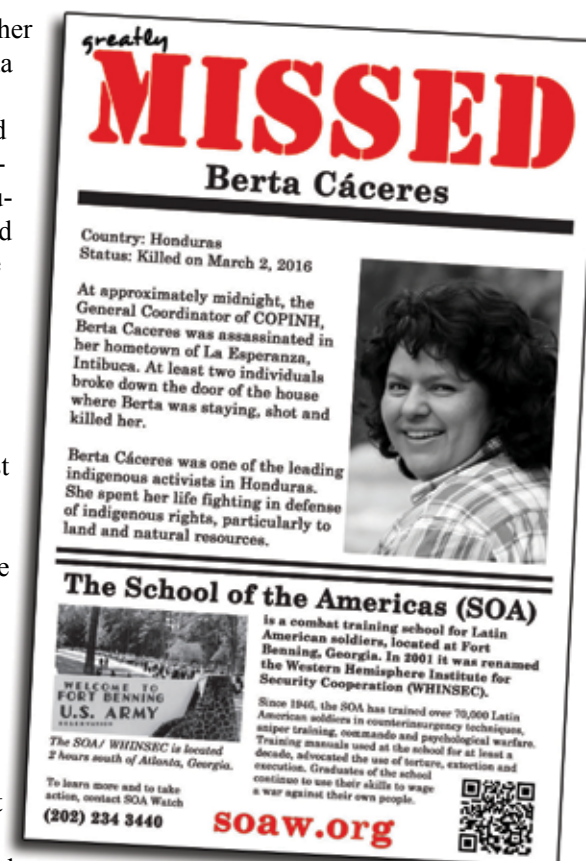
Berta Cáceres Assassinated

Continued from Page 1

jail on trumped up charges for her leadership in opposing the Agua Zarca Dam on the Gualcarque River. She went into hiding and after months of national and international pressure, the Honduran state finally realized it could not justify jailing Berta and the bogus charges were provisionally dismissed. However, the threats did not let up and Berta was informed more than once of plans to kill her. The Lenca communities organizing against the Agua Zarca Dam and other mega-projects faced increasing repression and violence by state security forces and hitmen.

Despite all of this Berta refused to remain silent. She continued organizing, speaking out, and accompanying the Lenca communities to confront the powers that be and defend their territories, even when local authorities indicated she was the one who needed to be killed. Berta taught us how to struggle with joy; she lifted up the life-giving nature of the struggle for another world, in human solidarity, even in the face of intense repression and militarization. She understood and she lived the interconnectedness of struggles, seeing the need to defend the earth, rivers, forests, and water as one with the struggle against racism, capitalism, militarization, and patriarchy and the struggle for self-determination, women's rights, and LGBT rights. Berta created a vision of the world that was whole, full of joy and the ancestral wisdom of life.

When confronted with the powers of death and destruction, when confronted with the Honduran military and the capitalist plundering of Honduras, even when armed men followed her and the military detained her, Berta refused to be silent. For that, she was murdered. But we must not allow her voice to be silenced. We



must take stronger action to demand the U.S. end its financing and support of the repressive Honduran regime and its military. We must organize against the \$750 million the U.S. Congress has proposed for the "Alliance for Prosperity," which Berta denounced will only bring more destruction and death to Central America. We must take action in solidarity with the Lenca people as they continue to struggle against the Agua Zarca dam and demand the concession of the Gualcarque River be canceled once and for all. We can also learn from Berta's vision, her joy in the struggle amidst so much repression, and her unending commitment to defending the earth and communities from the destruction being waged by the economic and political powers that be.

Continental Encuentro in Guatemala

Our Abya Yala, our Continent of Hope

From March 1-5, 2016, young people from 22 organizations and from 9 countries of the Americas, came together at the Cooperativa Nuevo Horizonte (New Horizons Cooperative) in Santa Ana, Guatemala to share experiences and struggles.

The encuentro was an opportunity to strengthen the network of *We Are One America Abya Yala* as a continental platform for communication. The network started in 2014 in Sanare, Venezuela (where some of the activists met for the first time at SOA Watch's *Rooted in Resistance, Sowing Sovereignty Encuentro*). They shared information about our peoples' realities, strategized on how to combat militarization in the Americas, and strengthened the bonds of this international family.



The organizers state, “the global fight against neoliberalism, which is nourished by our lands, consolidates itself in the middle of a worldwide crisis of the capitalist system. As young people, we are the protagonists of change as we advance in the construction of critical views of the hegemonic political systems and create alternatives of popular power.”

While the encuentro was underway, the tragic news about the murder of Honduran indigenous leader Berta Cáceres reached the participants. Brigitte and the representative from COPINH left to travel to Honduras immediately, and the rest of the group organized a commemoration to honor Berta, her life and her fight in the defense against mining and energy mega-projects on a continental level. Visit the encuentro webpage for more information and a video of the commemoration.



Encuentro Continental

Jóvenes Tejiendo Vida y Unidad Popular en Nuestra América

Reunidos como pueblos hermanos del 1 al 5 de marzo de 2016, jóvenes de 22 organizaciones de 9 países de nuestra América, juntos en la intención de compartir experiencias y luchas como eje de integración, nos dimos cita en la Cooperativa Nuevo

Horizonte, escenario inspirador de resistencia, para encontrarnos y generar una mirada continental a los problemas que aquejan a nuestras comunidades y territorios, resaltando y compartiendo la esperanza que se teje en el accionar cotidiano de nuestro trabajo.



Ante la indignación por el asesinato de la lideresa indígena hondureña Berta Cáceres, símbolo del amor al territorio y de lucha por la defensa contra los megaproyectos minero-energéticos a nivel continental, recogiendo su legado a favor de los pueblos y de la construcción de buen vivir, declaramos a ¡Berta Presente! en este Encuentro Continental, evento al que ella personalmente sumó jóvenes hondureños comprometidos con la vida.

Descarga completa la Declaratoria – Encuentro Continental Somos una Abya Yala:

www.somosunamerica.org

iPresente!

Cerremos la Escuela de las Américas y pongámos fin a la política militarista

Shut Down the SOA and Change Oppressive U.S. Foreign Policy

CONVOCANDO A TODXS LXS ORGANIZADRXS*

**MOVILÍZATE A LA FRONTERA
ENTRE MÉXICO Y LOS EE.UU.**

7 AL 10 DE OCTUBRE DE 2016

**NOGALES, ARIZONA Y
NOGALES, MEXICO**

**DESDE LA ESCUELA
DE LAS AMÉRICAS
HASTA LA FRONTERA**

- DESENMASCARAR LAS CAUSAS RAÍCES DE LA MIGRACIÓN
- PONERLE FIN A LA INTERVENCIÓN ESTADOUNIDENSE EN LAS AMÉRICAS
- RESISTIR LA MILITARIZACIÓN DE LA FRONTERA
- PARTICIPAR EN ACCIÓN DIRECTA NO VIOLENTA, EDUCACIÓN, ARTE Y CULTURA

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