

Central American Province of the Society of Jesus

The Society of Jesus in Central America and the Provincial Commission of the Social Apostolate, in the face of recent events that have arisen relating to our brother, companion and friend in the Lord, Fr. Ismael Moreno (Fr. Melo), we want to present the following:

1. **We completely support the apostolic work that Fr. Ismael Moreno carries out in his native Honduras** through the social center of the Society of Jesus, known as the Team of Reflection, Investigation and Communication (ERIC) and Radio Progreso.
2. **We stand by the social and pastoral work of Fr. Melo in charge of ERIC-Radio Progreso** for its great contribution in support for the dignity of the Honduran people, unmasking the pairing of corruption-impunity that has ruled the country for decades, but which has manifested itself with greater force since the blow to democracy in 2009.
3. **We express our deep solidarity with ERIC-Radio Progreso and with the context of its vision of the Republic of Honduras, and with its mission to fight for faith and justice in Honduras.** ERIC-Radio Progreso's work is inspired by the decrees of our own General Congregations (GC) and the clear option of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, that affirms: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

We want to declare that the attacks directed against Fr. Melo are the consequence of working to defend the human rights of all sectors of society and of accepting to be mediators for "reconciling the estranged," as our founder St. Ignatius of Loyola entrusted to us, whose feast day we celebrate today, July 31st. Facing the situation that has arisen with the honorable rector of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), we are calling for dialogue and tolerance as fundamental means in order to improve the national situation, as well as to defend ERIC-Radio Progreso. Dialogue and transparency are the best tools capable of unraveling the strategies of the powerful who hide in impunity and corruption. The defense of human rights of the most excluded populations is the horizon that guides the work of the Society of Jesus in Honduras. Fr. Ismael Moreno and the team of ERIC-Radio Progreso are a model and valiant example of the Mission of the Society of Jesus that was reaffirmed in the 36th General Congregation, where it defines its central Mission as the reconciliation of humankind, as a single expression of the reconciliation with God, with people and with creation (GC 36, Decree 1, Life and Mission).

As the Society of Jesus in Central America and the Provincial Commission for the Social Apostolate, we want to reaffirm that ERIC-Radio Progreso, and in particular Fr. Ismael Moreno, SJ, its director and our dear companion, have maintained in all of their positions a spirit of open and flexible dialogue, of reasonable tolerance, and of unwavering struggle for justice from a clear option for the poor and oppressed.

It is with this spirit that Fr. Ismael Moreno, Jesuit, tireless apostle, always seeking stances that approach conflicting positions in order to help them find solutions which are fully

human, accepted the call to facilitate dialogue between the students of the UNAH in their demands of the UNAH by way of the Honorable Madame Rector. In this work, he seeks to be faithful to how the Second Vatican Council defines faith: “For faith throws a new light on everything, manifests God's design for man's total vocation, and thus directs the mind to solutions which are fully human” (Gaudium et Spes 11). We are certain that in the conflict between the students and the Rector of the UNAH both parties seek to find “solutions which are fully human.” This is what Fr. Ismael Moreno has tried to foster. In this intent, it is also human that not all paths toward these solutions have been successful. But it is always possible to forge again dialogue, tolerance and the search for justice, in such a way as to reach these difficult “solutions which are fully human.” This has been the spirit of our companion, Fr. Ismael Moreno, as well as of the staff of ERIC-Radio Progreso as they seek a better future for the Republic of Honduras, whose people suffer greatly under the yolk of unjust inequality, and for whose welfare we are all responsible.

We are certain that none of these attacks will be able to undermine the firm integrity of the efforts of ERIC-Radio Progreso, of the members of its team and of its director, Fr. Ismael Moreno. Their search for “solutions which are fully human” for all the people of the Republic of Honduras, and especially for those people who we should care for most as Christians and as Jesuit companions of Fr. Melo, which is to say for the poor and oppressed to whom we must give preferential option, as preached by Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, our one Lord. For these reasons we support, reaffirm and admire the labor of Fr. Ismael Moreno and the entire team of ERIC-Radio Progreso.

Given in the Central American Region on the 31st day of the month of July in the year two-thousand seventeen, Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

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Provincial
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Fr. Francisco Iznardo, SJ
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Supported by the President of the Conference of Provincials for Latin America and the Caribbean (CPAL) of the Society of Jesus.

Fr. Roberto Jaramillo, SJ
President
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