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Flotilla Moskitia

Introduction

The department of Gracias a Dios, located in the far northeast of Honduras, is a territory of exceptional geopolitical, ecological, and cultural importance. Covering 16,997 km²—the second-largest area in the country—and with a population of approximately 98,314, this region borders the Caribbean Sea, Nicaragua, and the departments of Colón and Olancho. Its capital, Puerto Lempira, is the administrative center of a territory officially created on February 21, 1957, making it the last department to be established and the only one that contains the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982.

Honduran La Moskitia, as this region is also known, is an enclave of tropical rainforest, coastal lagoons, mountain ranges, and mighty rivers that harbor invaluable biodiversity and are home to Indigenous peoples such as the Miskito, Tawahka, Pech, and Garifuna, who have preserved their traditional ways of life. However, this natural and cultural wealth contrasts with a silent and profound crisis: the expansion of drug trafficking, illegal land grabbing, accelerated deforestation, extensive cattle ranching, and pressure from extractive projects—such as oil exploration and the Employment and Economic Development Zones (ZEDE)—have turned the region into a setting of structural violence, forced displacement, and state abandonment.

Despite progress in territorial titling that recognizes more than 1.5 million hectares under communal administration, encroachments by “third parties” and the construction of illegal roads threaten the integrity of the rainforest and the survival of its inhabitants. The lack of basic infrastructure, food insecurity affecting 43% of the population, and inadequate health and education services deepen the communities’ vulnerability, while the military presence and operations against organized crime have led to episodes of violence against civilians.

Against this backdrop, this proposal calls for organizing a humanitarian flotilla that will travel the rivers and communities of Gracias a Dios with a twofold objective: to bring the lack of protection and state abandonment endured by its residents to the attention of the public and international organizations, while also channeling basic aid and legal support to the communities. This flotilla seeks not only to denounce the absence of effective public policies, but also to create an advocacy platform that pressures the Honduran state to address the historic demands of Indigenous peoples and halt environmental destruction. In doing so, it aims to help build sustainable alternatives that guarantee the well-being of the population and protect one of Central America’s last green lungs through peaceful civil action coordinated with local organizations.

Flotilla Proposal

Navigating for Dignity and Territory in Honduran Moskitia

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Honduran Moskitia, specifically the municipality of Brus Laguna and its surrounding areas, is a territory of invaluable biocultural wealth that has been protected for generations by Indigenous peoples. However, it currently faces a multidimensional crisis that compounds the state’s historic neglect.

In response to this reality, and with the aim of breaking isolation and amplifying the voices of the communities, the idea of a Solidarity Flotilla has emerged: a river-based humanitarian expedition that will navigate the region's rivers in April 2027. The flotilla seeks not only to provide support, but also to serve as a bridge between the territory and the world by documenting conditions and demanding justice.

2. WHY A FLOTILLA?

Navigation is the means of livelihood and connection in La Moskitia. A flotilla therefore represents the most effective symbolic and practical mobilization to:

- Break the communities' informational and geographic isolation.
- Raise awareness of vulnerabilities in health, education, land, and justice.
- Coordinate local, national, and international forces to pressure the Honduran state and the international community.
- Strengthen peaceful resistance and the self-determination of Indigenous peoples.

3. OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

Prepare a comprehensive report on the sociopolitical, health, legal, cultural, and environmental conditions of the communities in the municipality of Brus Laguna in order to demand a decisive and immediate response from the State of Honduras regarding territorial dignity and human rights, while also issuing an urgent appeal to consulates and international organizations.

Specific Objectives:

1. Establish an equitable and supportive dialogue with at least three riverside communities through the establishment of base camps.
2. Create a space for healing and cultural resistance through community medicine and art.
3. Collect testimonies, data, and photographic/audiovisual evidence to support the final report.
4. Build a network of alliances among regional organizations, municipalities, civil society, and volunteer professionals.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: WORKING GROUPS

The flotilla will be organized into five groups to ensure the mission's efficiency, safety, and impact:

Working Group	Functions and Responsibilities
1. Medicine and Healing	Primary health care (nursing and general medicine). An initial assessment will identify the main illnesses. The objective of this phase is not merely to list problems, but to understand their causes and their real impact on people's lives, beginning with an: • Epidemiological profile: It is not enough to know that hypertension or diabetes exists. Their prevalence must be quantified, risk factors identified, and the level of control of these chronic diseases among the population served determined. • Health-care deficiencies: Identify gaps in the system's ability to respond to certain needs—for example, shortages of personnel or medicines. • Respect for and integration with the traditional medicine practiced

Working Group	Functions and Responsibilities by ancestral healers.
2. Art and Culture	Painting, music, dance, and theater workshops for children and adults. Preservation of oral histories. Evening artistic exchanges at the camp to strengthen the social fabric.
3. Communications	Photographic, video, and written documentation of the journey. Management of social media and communications outlets. Drafting the report and preparing press releases, if necessary and as appropriate.
4. Legal Assistance	Documentation of cases involving territorial dispossession, lack of documentation, and rights violations. Legal advice for the communities. Drafting a formal petition to the state and consulates.
5. Safety and Logistics	Planning the river route and operating boats. Managing communal meals. Setting up camps (tents, fuel, drinking water, and waste management). Coordinating the physical safety of the contingent and host communities.

5. PARTICIPANT PROFILE AND PARTNERSHIPS

We call for a broad and diverse alliance that includes:

- Social movements and collectives defending the territory.
- Regional organizations from La Moskitia.
- International organizations, whether they have a presence in Honduras.
- Municipalities (especially Brus Laguna) and community leaders (Miskito and Tawahka).
- Independent professionals: physicians, lawyers, journalists, photographers, teachers, and visual and performing artists.
- National and international civil society groups in solidarity with the cause.

6. EXPECTED RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES

- 1. Technical and Political Report: A detailed document describing current conditions, testimonies, legal analysis, and recommendations to be demanded of the state.**
- 2. Public Statement: A formal, media-focused call demanding a “Prompt Response from the State of Honduras.”**
- 3. Press Kit: High-quality audiovisual material (photos, videos, and testimonies) for international dissemination.**
- 4. Strengthened Partnerships: Creation of a permanent support network for the communities visited, extending beyond the flotilla.**

7. URGENT APPEAL TO CONSULATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

As part of its final deliverable, the flotilla will make an explicit appeal to embassies and consulates present in Honduras—especially those of countries with human rights treaties—to:

- Monitor the risks this territory faces now more than ever.
- Demand that the Honduran state guarantee the fundamental rights of Indigenous peoples.

- Activate international protection and cooperation mechanisms to halt the advance of external threats to the territory.

Conclusion

The Solidarity Flotilla is an act of love for the territory and a demand for justice. We will navigate with profound respect for the customs and autonomy of Indigenous peoples, understanding that our role as allies is to amplify their voices and press the state to fulfill its constitutional duty.

For the life, territory, and dignity of La Moskitia!

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