

THE 2015 RAFTO PRIZE – FACTS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CURRICULUM VITAE (ENGLISH) ISMAEL MORENO COTO, S.J. (57)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Better known as Padre Melo. Born in El Progreso, Yoro, Honduras, 1. January 1958.
Education: Studies in philosophy and Master in theology.
Jesuit priest, ordained 9. January 1989 in El Progreso, Honduras.
Member of the Society of Jesus (S.J.) – a religious congregation of the Catholic Church – since 1978.

POSITIONS AND WORK HISTORY

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| 2006 - now | Director of Radio Progreso in El Progreso, Honduras |
| 2002 – now | Founder and member of the editorial staff of the Honduran edition of <i>Envío</i> (social analytic journal). Member of <i>Envío</i> 's editorial staff in Nicaragua from 1997. |
| 2002 – now | Participant in reporting processes to the IACHR (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights), in cases where activists have been murdered because of their role in defending the environment and human rights. |
| 2002 | Founder of ERIC's (Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación) Human Rights Department in El Progreso, Honduras |
| 2001 – now | Director of ERIC - Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación, in El Progreso, Honduras |
| 2001 – now | Director/editor of the Honduran journal <i>A Mecate Corto</i> (monthly editions) |
| 1995 | Co-founder of the Honduran journal <i>A Mecate Corto</i> |
| 1989 – 1996 | Initiator of the Socorro Jurídico (Legal Aid) in the area of Aguán, Honduras |

RADIO PROGRESO

A local, independent radio station which has existed for over 50 years, and is part of the Catholic Radio Network. The station reaches 1,5 million listeners.

It is a popular radio that transmits music and entertainment, but known for its independent, progressive utterances against social injustice in Honduras. The station was shut down by the military around the time of the coup in 2009, and has been occupied several times since.



Two Radio Progreso team members, have been brutally murdered - Carlos Mejia in april 2014 and Nery Jeremías Orellada in July 2011. In 2014 Melo stated that 16 of ERIC/Radio Progreso employees, including Mejia, have received several death threats after 2009.

(Source: chicago.indymedia.org) Website: www.radioprogressohn.net

ERIC (Equipo de Reflexion, Investigacion y Comunicación)

Is a center for social analysis, research and communication concerning social and political issues in Honduras, founded in 1980. The work encompasses grassroots radio programming, human rights training programs; community organising and empowerment and formation of leadership committed to social change, and aiding migrant families.

Today Padre Melo is the director. In 2002 he established a Human Rights Department within ERIC. The organisation works closely with Radio Progreso.

Website: www.radioprogressohn.net

Sources: www.berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu, www.spalsocial.org

SHORT FACTS HONDURAS

Population: 8 423 917

Spanish speaking republic in Central America.

Capital: Tegucigalpa. Borders to El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Government: Juan Orlando Hernández is the current President of Honduras (since January 2014), and leader of the conservative National Party of Honduras.

GDP: 17,3 mill USD

The political landscape has traditionally been divided in two, between the conservative National Party and the Liberals, and has for a long period been ruled by military juntas. After [the 2009 Hondurian coup d'état](#) that deposed the president Zelaya, the political violence increased in strength. The country is characterized by high unemployment, noticeable in the form of social instability. 59% of the population live below the poverty line, and 36.2% live in extreme poverty.

Two of Honduras' cities are on the list of the world's most dangerous, Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. The latter has currently the highest homicide rate in the world; 173 per 100 000 inhabitants.

(Sources: World Bank, Globalis.no, Wikipedia, unodoc.org)