Statement by the International El Salvador Solidarity Network

As members of international organizations and as Salvadorans in the diaspora, we express our solidarity with the Salvadoran people who are in struggle and resistance in the face of sustained political persecution and harassment directed against the leftist opposition, social movements, and feminist organizations by the presidency of Nayib Bukele.

We denounce the arrest warrants issued against former government officials from the Farabundo Martí National Liberation (FMLN) along with the detentions of Violeta Menjívar, Erlinda Hándal, Calixto Mejía, Hugo Flores and Carlos Cáceres, which violate their legal guarantees to the presumption of innocence and to due process, rights that were denied during the era of repressive military governments and which today, thanks to popular struggles, are now constitutional rights which we are not prepared to relinquish. Furthermore, we recognize that a fair trial is impossible in the hands of judicial authorities that were installed following a legislative coup carried out on May 1 at the behest of the president.

We announce a state of emergency in the face of the repressive policies of the Salvadoran State.

We strongly condemn the arbitrary detentions, persecution and harassment being directed at the leftist opposition and the social and popular movements in El Salvador.

We denounce the actions of the Bukele government, which constitute an explicit return to the darkest and most repressive times in Salvadoran history. Week after week, we witness the state creating a narrative that seeks to whitewash the image of the Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES), attempting to erase its history of torture, disappearances, assassination, and repression. We reject the proposed doubling of the ranks of the Armed Forces and the normalization of military presence in the daily life of the Salvadoran people.

We point to the theft of nearly 600 case files from CO-MADRES, a crime which remains in impunity due to the passivity of the State, as a direct result of the politics of un-forgetting and of hate mongering.

Claiming the historical legacy of those who came before us, of those who struggled and risked the gravest and highest consequences, we declare:

In the face of authoritarianism and un-forgetting, we respond with international solidarity, struggle and organizing!

August 2, 2021