

Nobel laureate wants global environment court

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Yemeni Nobel Peace Prize laureate Tawakkol Karman calls for a global tribunal to prosecute executives of multinational corporations who damage the environment

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Tawakkul Karman proposed in Honduras on Tuesday the creation of a global tribunal to prosecute executives of multinational firms who damage the earth.

Karman, of Yemen, made the suggestion in the Central American country that Amnesty International last year described—along with its neighbor Guatemala—as the most dangerous in the world for

environmentalists.

"A world court should be created that could punish all these multinational corporations" that damage the environment and contribute to climate change, Karman said through a translator.

She spoke at a press conference with Shirin Ebadi of Iran, a fellow Nobel laureate who won the peace prize in 2003.

As part of the Nobel Women's Initiative, they aimed "to gather a first-hand account of the ongoing violence against women land defenders" in Honduras and in Guatemala, where they travelled later Tuesday, the group's website says.

The murder of Berta Caceres, 45, gunned down last year, highlighted the threat to Honduran activists and sparked international outrage.

Caceres opposed plans by the company Desarrollos Energeticos to build a hydroelectric dam across a river on which indigenous communities depended.

Rachel Vincent, advocacy and media director for the Nobel Women's Initiative, said Honduras has the world's highest rate of murders for human rights and land defenders.

Since 2009, 123 activists have been killed, she said.

In comments to AFP, Karman said a special international court is needed "to fight against corruption and money laundering and against all those involved in destroying the environment and exploiting the climate in a damaging way."

She said such a tribunal could be similar to The Hague-based

International Criminal Court which investigates and tries people charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Karman said the court she proposes would handle cases in which [human rights](#) and environmental activists or anti-corruption fighters are "found dead."

She also said the investigation of Caceres's murder must be deepened "to discover all those who benefited from this crime."

Eight people were arrested, among them an employee of Desarrollos Energeticos.

The Nobel laureates met Austra Berta Flores, the mother of Caceres, on Saturday.

In Guatemala, they are to join two other Nobel Peace Prize winners, Guatemala's Rigoberta Menchu and Jody Williams of the United States.

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