

Topic: Allegations related to illegal land appropriation and associated human rights abuses.

Updated as of April 2025

No.	Date and Topic	Complainant	Allegations
Q-004	October 30, 2024 Allegations related to illegal land appropriation and associated human rights abuses.	Mongabay Latam.	#1. Corporación Dinant is accused of acquiring lands that had previously been granted by the state to small-scale farmers as part of the Agrarian Reform process. #2. It is alleged that the conflict-affected area is being impacted by environmental disasters caused by large agribusiness companies. #3. It is alleged that agribusiness companies are involved and connected to the deaths of community leaders in the Aguán Valley. -It is alleged that security personnel from agribusiness companies have participated in acts of violence in the Aguán region, in coordination with state armed forces. They are held responsible for the murder of farmer Gregorio Chávez. #4. The Agrarian Platform holds Corporación Dinant responsible for land dispossession, violence, and environmental damage in the Aguán region. It is reported that complaints were filed with the Public Prosecutor's Office against the legal representative of Corporación Dinant and Exportadora del Atlántico, both companies belonging to the Dinant Group.
Description of the Facts	Allegation #1: The Agrarian Reform process in Honduras dates to the 1970s, when the State, through the 'Agrarian Reform Law,' established the conditions under which individuals or legal entities could make use of land granted to them by the State through the National Agrarian Institute, with ownership rights. In 1992, the “Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector Law” allowed farmers who had benefited from the agrarian reform to sell the lands they had been granted. The conflict in the Aguán did not originate from an illegal act of dispossession by the State or by third parties, whether companies or individuals. Rather, it began when groups of people forcibly occupied		

	productive oil palm plantations, attempting to justify their actions by invoking property titles that held no legal value, as the lands had been legally transferred decades prior to the invasions. At the time, Dinant legally acquired the lands that the cooperatives voluntarily sold, in accordance with the existing legal framework and without any form of coercion, based on the following negotiation terms: ▪ If the land had a plantation, the pricing factors included the type of species planted and/or the livestock present. ▪ In the case of oil palm, more specific criteria were defined based on the physiological state of the plantation (such as the age and health of the trees). ▪ Existing infrastructure on the land is to be purchased, such as fences, drainage systems, and internal roads. After the sale of the lands in 1997, the cooperatives were legally dissolved. Therefore, the individuals currently occupying the lands are not even legitimate representatives of the former cooperatives. Allegation #2: It does not explicitly refer to Dinant but mentions large industrial companies. No PQRS has been received directly from the communities in the influence area of plantations or extractors related to environmental impacts. Allegation # 3: Attached is a video of the Director of INA where he states about the different actors that are part of the conflict, mentioning the illegal ones. The murder of Gregorio Chávez took place in 2012. Dinant did not own the Paso Aguán plantation at the time of this tragic event. Dinant or its executives have never been charged or even mentioned by any authority in connection with this death. According to the Ministry, the Unit for the Investigation of Violent Deaths in Bajo Aguán (UMVIBA for its acronym in Spanish), established in 2011, has been responsible for conducting various investigations. For example, in 2021, found guilty culpable Mr. Osvin Nahúm Caballero Santamaría, or the crime of murder of peasant leaders José Ángel Flores, president of the Unified Peasant Movement of Aguán (MUCA) and Silmer Dionisio George Henríquez, member of the peasant company “Camarones” (Camarones)”. Allegation #4: In its first statements, the Agrarian Platform, as the group that invaded the Dinant plantations calls itself, demanding, among other things, the repeal of the Law for the Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector, which was the reason for the voluntary sale of land by the cooperatives. It also calls for the decriminalization of the peasant struggle and the suspension of the trials of 3,081 peasants.
Company´s Response	Allegation #1: Dinant has provided the government with all the required information regarding its property titles, which have been audited multiple times by the competent authorities, financial institutions, certification bodies, among others, with no irregularities found.

	Allegation # 2: Dinant has a SHE team at all sites that ensures compliance with environmental regulations and certification processes. In addition, it is responsible for reporting and overseeing any deviations from environmental regulations related to the operational and production processes. • Dinant has implemented a grievance mechanism that allows communities to submit their complaints and concerns as they see fit, with a commitment to provide a response within the time frame specified in the procedure. • Dinant has assigned a social team that is constantly engaging with communities to gather any complaints or concerns they may have. • An environmental and social impact assessment is conducted in a participatory manner with surrounding communities, accompanied by a jointly developed plan that is updated every two years. To date, the company has never received any unfavorable result from this process. Allegación # 3: Dinant has publicly expressed its commitment to respecting human rights, is a signatory to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and voluntarily decided to disarm its security guards on its plantations since 2013. • Dinant has a human rights policy that is continuously shared with all its employees and contractors. • Dinant has publicly called on the government to promptly clarify the acts of violence occurring in the Aguán region and has made itself available to support any ongoing investigations as needed. • Dinant is a member of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. In addition to training its employees and contractors on these principles, the company has also extended this training to communities within its area of influence. • In all the investigations conducted over the years regarding the death of Mr. Gregorio Chávez, no authority has ever directly or indirectly implicated the company. Moreover, the company has always made itself available to the authorities to support the corresponding investigations, if necessary. Allegation #4: Dinant respects the law and has publicly called on government authorities to clarify the various complaints that have been filed and to expedite the corresponding investigative procedures. • As part of efforts to resolve the conflict, in 2012 Dinant sold 3,962.5 hectares of occupied land to members of the MUCA cooperative through a tripartite agreement with the government. Unfortunately, illegal invasions of Dinant's property continued even after the sale.
Status	Closed