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WHO WE ARE



Peace Brigades International (PBI) is a non-governmental organization with more than 36 years of experience in international accompaniment. PBI has been present in **Guatemala** since 1983 (with a break between 1993 and 2003) protecting space for people, organizations and collectives that promote human rights in a nonviolent manner and suffer repression for their work. PBI works only at the request of local organizations.

OUR MANDATE

We seek to contribute to create the necessary conditions so that defenders, organizations and communities can continue their work aimed at increasing respect, observance and protection of human rights and strengthening the rule of law in Guatemala.

OUR PRINCIPLES

We work under the principles of nonviolence, non-partisanship, non-intervention with a horizontal organizational structure and by consensus.

WHAT WE DO

The international accompaniment we propose is global in nature and flexible, at the service of the demands and needs of social organizations who request it. The work focus of global accompaniment aims to weave an effective protective network, depending on the elements relevant to the context.

Presence of international observers

PBI has a team of volunteers in Guatemala who accompany threatened or at-risk human rights defenders, provide presence at offices of threatened organizations, visit rural communities, and carry out international observation.

Interlocution with authorities, advocacy and lobbying

PBI volunteers maintain continuously contact with Guatemalan civil authorities and with international entities like the United Nations and embassies, to make them actors in our accompaniment and protection work, as well as make them aware of concerns about areas where we work and ask for their support. Through the Advocacy Coordinator in Europe and PBI's Country Groups we keep up-to-date multilateral institutions, the governments of 13 European countries, North American and Oceania on the situation of Guatemalan defenders.

Publications

We produce and distribute information on the human rights situation in Guatemala, based on public information sources and our direct observation.

Strengthening capacities

We continuously train the PBI international observer team and facilitate spaces for interchange and training on security and protections for Guatemalan defenders, with the support of existing local resources.



CURRENT NEWS



At the end of his visit in November 2017, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that five years after his predecessor's visit, *Guatemala continues stagnant at the same crossroads, (Guatemala can either) create a democratic State, based on the rule of law and regulated by the principles of human rights or remain in an old unjust system where few people benefit at the cost of the majority.*

In 2017 we saw the reconfiguration of new pacts between elites who seek to continue controlling state structures that benefit a few people. An example of this was the stalemate in Congress regarding the constitutional reform for the justice sector which excluded debates on legal pluralism or the attempt to reform the Penal Code allowing for exoneration of political party leaders for the crime of illicit campaign financing. The later known as Pact of Corrupt



Politicians sparked massive protests and was finally stopped by the Constitutional Court (CC). Also in separate protest, citizens called for the resignation of President Jimmy Morales because of his attempt to remove Iván Velásquez, head of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). The trigger that set off this situation was when the CICIG requested procedures to strip the president of his political immunity for illegal campaign financing

during the 2015 election. Even though the Supreme Court of Justice moved forward on stripping the president of his immunity, the Congress decided to maintain the president's privilege, a shield in favor of impunity.

Campesino and indigenous communities have been hindered in exercising their economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, particularly in relation to the right to land and control and management of natural resources. Several communities in the departments of Alta Verapaz and Petén suffered forced evictions off lands which they claim as theirs as they have lived on them for generations. These evictions have taken place with no regard for international standards and despite the fact that some communities are immersed in dialogue processes with state authorities.

The right for indigenous peoples to decide their own way of life and development has been put at risk by the State with their attempt to regulate free, prior and informed consent. This right is outlined in Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Regulating consultations has provoked mistrust and has been rejected by communities as they feel different forms of organization and decision making are not being taken into consideration. The OHCHR also showed special concern for the debate of this bill that does not comply with international standards for human rights. In this debate, there has been a dangerous tendency to continue business projects in violation of international conventions on the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. An example of this are the two legal rulings which revoked prior court decisions that established suspending the Oxec I and Oxec II hydroelectric dams in the Department of Alta Verapaz and the San Rafael mine in the Department of Santa Rosa for incompliance with Convention 169.

These verdicts increased the high levels of tension that these types of projects have caused, both in communities directly involved as well as in the legal sphere and media provoking smear campaigns and criminalization of community leaders and social organizations involved in legal defense of these cases. Again in 2017, the criminalization processes (defamation, legal complaints, arbitrary detention and illegal detention) stand out among the attacks most suffered by those who defend rights in Guatemala. In the case of women, they are doubly affected as on one hand they face patterns of criminalization which attack their gender and bring their personal lives under social questioning and on the other hand they suffer an increase in economic burden and have to care for their families when their partners are incarcerated.

According to the Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Guatemala (UDEFEUGUA), this year the number of attacks on human rights defenders has increased, particularly towards those who defend the right to a healthy environment (land, territory and natural resources). Female human rights defenders have received nearly half of the registered attacks and those defenders who defend environmental rights are the most attacked. Violence against women stands out in 2017. An event that shows the extreme violence they live in: on March 8th, 41 girls died and 15 were injured in a fire in State-run *Virgen de Asuncion* Home for which public authorities are being investigated. UDEFEUGUA highlights that many of the girls had denounced aggressions like human trafficking, cruel treatment, ill-treatment, inhumane treatment as well as sexual, physical, and psychological violence before the fire.

In light of the fact that violence against persons defending rights is worsening, the lack of progress by the Guatemalan State in designing and implementing



policies and plans for protection continues to be of concern. The need for public policy on the protection of human rights defenders was stressed in the Urgent Declaration on Guatemala issued by the European Union Delegation and by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Guatemala.



To this we add the concern for several bills currently being debated in Congress and if ratified they will further deepen inequity, increase vulnerability for human rights defenders, organizations, and communities and open new legal avenues to violate the rights of rural and indigenous communities and

organizations that seek to protect their field of action and promote social justice in the country.

PBI will continue to express concerns for the security situation of human rights defenders and accompany them in their peaceful claims for their rights.

WHO WE ACCOMPANY

In Guatemala, PBI accompanies organizations or social processes that peacefully fight against impunity, for fair access to land, and against negative effects of globalization on human rights.

In 2017 we accompanied 10 organizations or social processes, one individual female defender in a high-risk situation (74 people, 53 men and 21 women).

We started a new accompaniment to the Peaceful Resistance of the communities of Cahabón in Alta Verapaz, and in August we accompanied a students group of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala (USAC) who actively promoted the electoral process of the University Students Association (AEU) with the goal of retaking democratic control of the AEU. This accompaniment was provided as a result of multiple threats suffered by students. Historically, the AEU was an autonomous space for critical thinking and articulation for the student movement. Since 2000 the AEU has been coopted by a power structure made up of veteran students linked to major political parties. Thanks to PBI's accompaniment, among other factors, the elections took place without incidents. Lenina García was the first woman to be elected General Secretary of this institution as a result of the elections. We continued to follow the situation of human rights defenders in Petén with two follow-up trips to the department. We also observed on an ongoing basis the hearings of the forced disappearance case of Marco Antonio Molina Theissen in which five high ranking military officials are accused. The trial will start in March 2018.



Two visits to various local organizations



K'iche Peoples Council (CPK)



Cunén Communities' Council (CCC)



The Communities in Peaceful Resistance of La Puya



Peaceful Resistance of La Laguna



Human Rights Law Firm (BDH)



Peaceful Resistance of Cahabón



Chicoyogüito Neighborhood Association of Alta Verapaz (AVECHAV)



Verapaz Union of Peasant Organisations (UVOC)



Ecumenical and Social Coordination for the Defence of Life in Chiquimula and Zacapa



'New Day' Ch'orti' Campesino Central Coordinator (CCCND)



MAYAN, XINKA AND GARÍFUNA LANGUAGES



We maintained a continuous attention to other processes of human rights defense through observations, punctual accompaniments and dissemination of information, paying special attention to women defenders in situations of high risk.



WHO WE ACCOMPANY

PEACEFUL RESISTANCE OF CAHABÓN: accompanying q'eqchi' communities defending their collective rights

The Peaceful Resistance of Cahabón is made of more than 190 q'eqchi' communities who live in the Cahabón River basin. Since 2015 they have organized around defense of territory and against the launch of the OXEC I and OXEC II hydroelectric projects installed on the Oxec River, a tributary of the Cahabón River. These projects are operated by OXEC S.A. company who belongs to the Energy Resources Capital Corp (ERCC) group registered in Panama.

The communities' livelihoods are sustained by agriculture. They have denounced the impacts on their way of life and the denial of the right to water due to the presence of the hydroelectric projects. They demand respect for their collective rights as



q'eqchi' peoples and that the company's licenses will be revoked as they were granted without a good faith consultation in accordance with national and international instruments on the protection on the rights of indigenous peoples. Because of their demands the communities suffer threats, intimidation, defamation and processes of criminalization against their leaders.

The Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) ruled in January 2016 in favor of an injunction filed by the communities forcing the company to suspend all activities due to lack of consultation. However, this verdict was overturned by the CC in May 2017 and the higher court's ruling allowed the company to continue

operations and granted a period of one year to consult communities. This judgement as been widely criticized as it contravenes the principle of free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and because the consultation will take place in only some of the communities affected by the hydroelectric projects. As the Constitutional Court's President stated, this judgement is emblematic because it goes beyond trying to resolve a concrete case and aims to set precedent to regulate the procedure of consultation of indigenous peoples. After this ruling, the Guatemalan government started a process to regulate consultations that has been highly criticized because it was not done in consultation with indigenous peoples and does not take into consideration their ways of participation.

The communities decided to organize a good faith community consultation in response to the May 2017 ruling and because the mayor of Cahabón failed to back a municipal consultation. Since then, the levels of conflict as well as attacks towards the communities have increased in the area. PBI started accompanying the Resistance in July 2017 observing assemblies, being present in communities, spreading information about this case and requesting that Guatemalan and international entities provide protective measures for community members.

On August 27, the communities held a community consultation in which 26,537 people professed against the hydroelectric projects while only 11 people showed support. PBI observed the activities in coordination with other human rights organizations which according to community members contributed that no violence erupted despite high levels of tension. After the consultation, at the request of the Resistance, we facilitated a workshop in q'eqchi' on security for about 60 participants. The overwhelming interest shown by communities in increasing their own self-protection capacities has prompted us to plan a series of workshops on the subject in different communities in 2018.

PBI's accompaniment helped community members feel more secure and supports them to continue their actions in defense of rights of the q'eqchi' peoples even in a hostile context.

Thanks to your visit I am no longer bothered. There have been no more threats since you came to my community. It seems that a lot of people saw you all and became aware of PBI's presence. We now live more peacefully. (community member from the Peaceful Resistance of Cahabón communities)



PBI's political advocacy work also contributed in increasing international concern for the conflict situation in the area. One example of this is Grupo Filtro's, composed of representatives from different embassies and other international entities, visit to the Cahabón River territory. During this visit diplomats met with communities affected by the hydroelectric dams, local authorities, and the OXEC company.

Communities continue to demand respect for their decision to not implement the Oxec hydroelectric



complex in their territories. As a result of the peaceful actions of protest that they were carrying out, the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) responded by announcing that in December 2017 that MEM had concluded the process established by the CC for the consultation of 11 communities directly affected by the Oxec project in September. The lack of knowledge of this process by implicated communities and social organizations that accompany the Resistance and the MEM's affirmations that the consultation process does not contemplate the possibility to deny the

installation of the project but had the aim of reaching agreements among communities, company and State, have increased concern for the possibility of scaling conflict. For this reason, ongoing international attention on this case is suggested. PBI will continue to accompany communities in resistance so that the space for peaceful defense of their collective rights as q'eqchi' peoples is kept open.



WHO WE ACCOMPANY

IN DEFENSE OF LAND RIGHTS: accompanying the Union of Campesino Organizations of the Verapaces (UVOC) communities

UVOC is made up of q'eqchi', poqomchi', achi' and mestizo families and communities whom they accompany in the process of strengthening their organizing and defense of territory from the Mayan worldview.

At the beginning of 2017, several UVOC communities located in the Department of Alta Verapaz suffered forced evictions or threats of eviction. In most cases the affected people were not adequately notified. And once the evictions took place, they were left to their luck with no protection of their basic rights. Likewise, there was a tendency to criminalize community members, accusing them of aggravated usurpation, despite the fact that they had lived on the lands for several generations.



The Santa Inés community, in Santa Cruz, Alta Verapaz, stands out among the affected population as they were evicted despite their participation for 16 years in a dialogue space with state authorities aiming to reach a peaceful resolution that guarantees access to land for families. Also, the communities of Nueva Sebox and Nueva Seamay in Senahú were affected and families have been attacked with firearms, suffered death threats and their crops and houses have been burnt which has left them unprotected without access to food and other items essentials for survival. Also in this case, the attacks took place despite an active dialogue roundtable with the Secretary of Agrarian Affairs (SAA). In this context, UVOC's coordinator, lawyer, and other members of the community have received death threats.

PBI has accompanied UVOC since 2005 following the situation of these communities, observing hearings of people who have been criminalized, accompanying members of the organization to dialogue roundtables and accompanying community members to file complaints at the Office of Public Prosecutions (MP) for the destruction of their lands and crops.

According to UVOC members, PBI's presence contributed to the fact that authorities responded positively to their requests for accompaniment and to visit community members in jail and also in some cases that hearings took place without delaying the process which happens frequently and has negative impacts on the accused.

We can see the effect of PBI's accompaniment in the courts because at least they have respected or violated less, the rights of the communities. UVOC's lawyer always shows how good he feels when he is accompanied by PBI. PBI's work has been effective from the start (Carlos Morales, UVOC Coordinator).

We also provide political accompaniment both during emergencies like evictions as well as following-up on families situations: the political advocacy that PBI does is highly meaningful (Carlos Morales, UVOC Coordinator).

During the emergencies we were in phone contact with OHCHR, Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH) at the local and national level, the SAA, the Presidential Commission on Human Rights (COPREDEH), and the National Civil Police (PNC) expressing our concern for the situation of the evicted people, among them pregnant women, senior citizens and children. In the months following, we took our concerns for the security of these people and the human rights situation to our meetings with Guatemalan institutions both at the local and national level and with international institutions (embassies, European Union delegation in Guatemala, members of the European Parliament and European External Action Service in Brussels). Also, for the Universal Periodic Review on Guatemala we made recommendations to create pertinent national level legislation and clear guidelines to prevent forced evictions in compliance with international standards. This was reflected in point 72 in the Summary of other stakeholders information on Guatemala redacted by the OHCHR.

With the aforementioned actions, we helped generate additional support for evicted communities from international organizations like the OHCHR or the



Grupo Filtro, formed by diverse embassies present in the country. These international entities were in contact with different Guatemalan authorities (PDH, COPREDEH, PNC), so that international norms on evictions were respected and to ensure the security of those detained.

In months following the evictions we contributed in getting the OHCHR to visit Alta Verapaz two times and the Embassy of the United Kingdom held a meeting



with the authorities of Alta Verapaz to follow-up on the situation of the families and threats to community members. We also facilitated a meeting between UVOC members and the EU's Human Rights Programs Officer which resulted in a visit by the *Grupo Filtro* to the department of Alta Verapaz in which they met with UVOC and community representatives.

Despite international attention, there is still concern over the possibility of evictions as well as the constant

lack of access to land and other natural goods that perpetuate the impoverished conditions that affect indigenous communities and campesinos in Guatemala. PBI continues to accompany UVOC in its efforts to make the rights of indigenous peoples be respected and that their worldview be recognized to build new relations with land and territory.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION





ADVOCACY TOURS AS A PATH TO MUTUAL LEARNING

This year we seek to add a new focus to the tours that we facilitate for accompanied defenders. In the past, advocacy tours have aimed to raise the profile of the defenders on the international level to increase dissuasion against attacks on them. With the tours we facilitated this year we sought to create spaces for learning and sharing, both between the participating defenders and between Guatemalan community-based organizations and the countries visited.

In March 2017, with PBI Colombia Project we organized a joint speaking tour with Colombian human rights defender Berenice Celeita and Guatemalan defender Marcos Ramirez Vargas both of whom have ample experience and participation in the Peace Accords of their respective countries. This joint tour allowed to make visible moments of risk for the compliance of Peace Accords as well as central elements so that accords can be positive and sustainable. Both participants, one from the experience of ongoing negotiation and the other from the perspective of 20 years after the signing of peace accords, stated the importance of social organizations participating in all phases of the accords. The joint tour allowed for the creation of links between two peace processes, build mutual learning and deepen reflections from a comparative perspective.

In collaboration with PBI Spain and the *Perifèries del Món* organization, we realized a fall tour in which two defenders from UVOC participated: Rony Morales, q'eqchi' community communicator with advocacy experience and Adrián Cal Gualim, poqomchí community leader. Along with their community, they defended their right and obtained access to land against the interests of a logging company. This was the first time they had the opportunity to share their experience outside of the region where they live. The two defenders went to Madrid, Cantabria, Andalucía, País Valencià holding meetings with authorities, and also participated in sessions to reflect on the role of free and community media in the defense of territory, in film festivals on Latin American indigenous peoples and sharing with agro-ecological cooperative projects and with campesino organizations. These meetings have been highly valued, and we think they contribute to strengthen mutual learning, the capacity of resilience of organizations in their different territories, and to strengthen solidarity among peoples.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION





SEEKING COMMITMENT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF GUATEMALA

Throughout the year we have held meetings with Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Europe, human rights departments, international actors, members of Parliament and with multiple organisms of the United Nations. We have been able to leverage this work thanks to the support of PBI country groups. In meetings and print communication we have sought to inform and attract attention to the security situation of human rights defenders in Guatemala and specifically to the organizations accompanied by PBI. We have also sought that these entities use instruments at their reach to proactively promote the protection of the defense of human rights.

Our work helped contribute to the urgent resolution on Guatemala issued by the European Parliament in February 2017 which shows concern for the situation of defenders and their commitment to the struggles against impunity and corruption. At the same time, the resolution demands, among other things, that the government develop a public policy on protection. Five months after its approval, and also in response to suggestions made by PBI, 25 European members of Parliament sent a letter to members of the Guatemalan Congress retaking points from the resolution and expressing concern for the lack of progress on reforms to the judicial system and lack of policy on protection. We believe that this is a way to make visible the international community's interest in the human rights situation in Guatemala. This can encourage national initiatives for their protection, while at the same time it has led to a more strategic commitment of European members of Parliament with the processes in Guatemala.

Likewise, we positively value PBI's contributions to the revision of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Guatemala. These have been included in the summary of communications of the parties interested in Guatemala prepared by the OHCHR and have influenced recommendations of other governments to the State of Guatemala. Also on this front, the collaborative work of PBI groups in several countries has allowed us to share our concerns at different levels which has been very positive.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION



MEETING OF FEMALE DEFENDERS OF BODY-LAND TERRITORY (TERRITORIO CUERPO-TIERRA), WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN GUATEMALA

In relation to our advocacy work that we do in Guatemala, we would like to highlight the meeting of women defenders with representatives of the international community present in Guatemala.

On March 29 and 30, we invited 25 female defenders of body-land territory to a meeting to share about their realities and the challenges they encounter in their different struggles. Participants represented 15 organizations and collectives from 9 departments of Guatemala.



It was evident that their security situation is precarious, and defenders from rural areas are unprotected. In many cases they do not have access to state institutions in charge of protecting at-risk women. The event culminated in a breakfast with representatives from the German, Canadian, Spanish, United States, United Kingdom and Swedish Embassies as well as the EU Delegation and OHCHR.

Female defenders shared the challenges of their work in different areas. The topics covered in the breakfast with the international community were diverse including: from the restriction of freedom of expression by community-based media and the lack of recognition for their work to the work of women's organizations who accompany women survivors of violence, who are very vulnerable due to the lack of adequate response on behalf of state institutions. They expressed the obstacles they encounter at the local level while interacting with municipal authorities, MP, and PNC. These difficulties are the results of the lack of preparation and training of authorities necessary to address cases of gender-based family violence. These authorities reproduce sexist attitudes that re-victimize the women who come demanding justice for the violence suffered.

A major difficulty shared by women's organizations who administer shelters for abused women is that the State does not comply with its responsibility to provide economic resources to maintain the shelters.

On the other hand, defenders of land and territory are facing defamation and criminalization processes against themselves and/or their partners. This translates, in most cases into an extra burden in their lives, as they are financially and morally responsible for supporting their family, organization and community.

Midwives also attended this meeting. They are fighting to have their important work in communities recognized by the State, as they are responding to the needs of many women who do not have access to the public health system.

At the end of the activity, defenders presented the international community with a list of requests so that their work will be supported and recognized as deserved within the EU guidelines for human rights defenders and the EU guidelines to eliminate violence against women and girls and all forms of discrimination against them.

It was interesting to have contact with the international community so that they have firsthand information about us defenders, to be able to contextualize the realities in which we work to defend the rights of women. PBI made the effort for us to learn about the guidelines, they say that embassies are committed to meet us to get input to support the State on matters of institutionality in favor of women. What was lacking for me was space for the internationals to follow-up on or respond to the requests they have received from us the defenders (Ana Cumes, REDMUSOVI member).

STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITY

Throughout the year PBI has facilitated trainings and spaces for exchanging ideas led by Guatemalan experts.

In May the **Ninth Meeting of female defenders of body-land territory (territorio cuerpo-tierra) was held in Antigua, Sacatepéquez**. Before this activity started, we observed a press conference organized by Tzk'at Network of Ancestral Healers in the Central Park in Guatemala City in which defenders and mothers of the girls who died in the fire of the State-run *Virgen of Asuncion* home demanded justice. Nora Cortiñas, co-founder of the Mothers of the *Plaza de Mayo* in Argentina, attended the ceremony. When this activity was over, 30 female defenders went to Antigua, where the meeting started. During two days they shared experiences of the different struggles in which each woman participates, and special emphasis was placed on the role of mothers, their strength and the resources they deploy in the public defense of their rights. Nora Cortiñas recounted her experience fighting for justice in Argentina since the 1980s. Claudia Korol of the *Pañuelos en Rebeldía* Collective in Argentina shared advocacy and activist actions that the collective has carried out to accompany the Guatemalan struggle to shed light on the deaths of the girls who died in the fire of the State-run home. The meeting was a space of self-care and self-awareness which the women defined as a deeply healing and enriching experience.

Through the healing activity, I have healed and my spirits got higher. Whatever they do, I am not going to part from my organization. (Corina Ramírez, member of the Lutheran Church of Guatemala ILUGUA)

In the month of July, PBI facilitated a **Workshop on Criminalization** for human rights defenders in Chiquimula. Thirty-four people participated of which



17 were women, mostly from the departments of Chiquimula and Zacapa where PBI accompanies the 'New Day' Central Coordinator Ch'orti' (CCCND) and the Ecumenical and Social Coordinator in Defense of Life in Zacapa and Chiquimula.



Defenders from other regions of Guatemala were also invited to this workshop where they shared meaningful experiences, successes, and obstacles of their criminalized struggles. The topics of defamation, criminalization, and persecution were addressed

and collectively participants identified recurrent proceedings and patterns. Likewise, they proposed preventative measures and ways to strengthen their movements and organizations with the objective of minimizing and if possible preventing these practices. They also reflected on male chauvinism and sexism as factors that internally weaken organizations and social movements. The morning of the third workshop day was dedicated to daily protective measures.

Participants positively evaluated the training, concluding that the objective of strengthening self-protection abilities of defenders, communities, and organizations was achieved.

The training on security measures is useful to us. We will share the information with our community. It is useful not only to us –the leaders- but also the people in our communities. In our meetings we have to inform (others); a good leader shares information with the community. (Luis Ramírez de Rosa, indigenous authority from Las Flores, Jocotán, Chiquimula)

On this occasion we hired photographer and documentarian, James Rodríguez, to create a short video of the workshop. It can be seen at our website and Facebook page.

The **Tenth Meeting of Female Defenders of body-land territory**, took place in El Estor, Izabal. This was a space for sharing and healing for 21 female defenders from different departments in Guatemala. The activity coincided with the commemoration of the death of Adolfo Ich Chamán, leader and teacher from El Estor, who was killed 8 years ago by members of a security company for the nickel mine *Compañía Guatemalteca de Níquel S.A.* (CGN), subsidiary of *Hudbay Minerals Inc.* (Canada). The meeting participants accompanied Adolfo Ich's widow, Angélica Choc, defender seeking justice for his murder and defender of the q'eqchi' region, in her mourning.

PBI GUATEMALA VOLUNTEERS

PBI Guatemala is made up of several volunteer work spaces which include:

- ✓ On-the-ground team
- ✓ Project committee
- ✓ Training team

In 2017 a total of 18 accompaniers formed part of the **on-the-ground team**, 10 women, and 8 men of 9 different nationalities.



INTERVIEW WITH MONTSERRAT GARCÍA BLAS, MEMBER OF PBI GUATEMALA COMMITTEE:

What is the project committee and its functions?

According to PBI's by-laws, project committees have to be made up of a minimum of four people, one of which is the project coordinator. The committee must also be comprised of external people who are not staff nor part of the volunteer on-the-ground team. The committee's responsibilities include: create and implement project's strategic plan; create and approve annual operational plans and budgets; ensure risk and security evaluations are carried out; ensure that we comply with the laws in the country where we operate; etc. This is the body that supervises all of the projects work and answers before the PBI International structure.

Depending on the skills and experience of the committee members, we support the following areas: finances and fundraising; personnel management; publications; training volunteers; analyzing current events; and security. Supporting the on-the-ground team is constant with weekly communication or more frequently depending on the situation.



Acompañamiento a la Asociación para el Desarrollo Integral de las Víctimas de la Violencia en las Verapaces, Maya Achi (ADIVIMA), Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, 1997. Foto PBI.

We maintain a good balance between young people with recent in-country experience and with people with a long history with PBI and the project which ensures a good equilibrium and enriches the perspective of the committee.

Something that is very valuable to the PBI Guatemala committee is the deep respect and warmth among its members, which builds a lot of confidence and familiarity. It is very easy to work like this.



Belgium	1
Colombia	3
Czech Republic	1
Ecuador	1
Germany	3
Italy	2
Spain	4
Switzerland	1
United Kingdom	2

How did you become a volunteer for the project committee?

Forming part of the committee was a way to stay involved in the project after leaving the coordination. (Montse was coordinator between 2003-2008 and on-the-ground volunteer before that). I felt very integrated and it was easy to change my role from coordinator to a volunteer member of the committee. Also, because I had been part of the office staff, I knew the areas in which more support was needed. I felt that I could not leave the project and comrades. I always felt very committed to PBI, the project, and with Guatemala. For this reason, I am also part of the PBI country group in Spain.

Accompaniment to the Association for the Integral Development of the Victims of Violence of the Verapaces, Maya Achi (ADIVIMA), Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, 1997. Photo PBI.

What do you most value about the committee and in general about the project?

In regards to the committee, I specifically value that we respect each other and that we take care of each other. We are able to maintain a good work environment despite remote communication as we are located in different places in the world. I particularly value the strong commitment of each member.

In regards to the project, I highly value its capacity to adapt to the needs of defenders. For example, our contribution to creating networks of women defenders or the effort to make information more accessible for communities through the *Boletines Populares*. The final objective is to support defenders so that they can continue their work with less risk.

I would also like to mention the excellent work that the project is doing in the areas of advocacy, finances, and fundraising. This work is supported by PBI country groups. I believe we are lucky to have the level of commitment and professionalism of the people who work in the office.



Montse, in the name of PBI, receiving ICIP Peace Builders Award 2016 from the Cataluña Government.

PBI IN NUMBERS

PHYSICAL PRESENCE

- 243** Accompaniment to organizations and social entities Meeting with accompanied organization and social entities
- 61** Meeting with other Guatemalan organizations
- 118** Meeting with other Guatemalan organizations
- 24** Observation of events organized by Guatemalan civil society

ADVOCACY AND DIALOGUE

- 81** Meetings with Guatemalan authorities at the state, department, and local levels
- 48** Meeting with diplomatic corps and embassies, OHCHR in Guatemala
- 27** Reuniones con Ministerios de Asuntos Exteriores y organismos Internacionales en Europa
- 5** Human rights defenders advocacy tours to Europe
- 1** Meeting of female human rights defenders and international community in Guatemala


PUBLICATIONS

Boletín Popular **2**



12 Monthly Information Package

2



Bi-annual Bulletins

1 Video



STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITY

We facilitated **4** workshops* for **148** participants from 28 organizations

- *1** Workshop on security and protection
- *2** Meetings on healing for women defenders
- *1** Workshop on criminalization of social protest





MEMBERS OF PBI GUATEMALA IN 2017

VOLUNTEER TEAM IN GUATEMALA:

Corsin Blumenthal (Switzerland), Brigitte Fischer-Brühl (Germany), Alicia Guitérrez Esturillo (Spain), Roberto Meloni (Italy), Katerina Rosochova (Czech Republic), Stephanie Brauser (Germany), Cristina Ortega González (Spain), Catriona Rainsford (United Kingdom), Gustavo García Andrade (Colombia), Francisco Vanegas Toro (Colombia), Jan Sabbe (Belgium), Anabel Butler (United Kingdom), Emanuela Lamieri (Italy), Andreas Lo Grasso (Germany), Laura Gomáriz Cebrián (Spain), Ricardo Henao Galvis (Colombia), Dylan Lebecki (Ecuador/Portugal) and Pilar Tablado (Spain).

PROJECT COMMITTEE:

Montserrat García (Spain), Maike Holderer (Germany), Danilo Guerrero Díaz (Chile), Samuel Jones (United Kingdom), Kerstin Reemtsma (Germany), Amaya de Miguel (Spain), Irene Izquieta (Spain); Adam Lunn (United Kingdom); Pedro Cárdenas (Mexico).

FORMATION TEAM:

Maike Holderer (Germany), María Cayena Abello (Colombia), Erika Martínez García (Spain), Sanne de Swart (Netherlands), Kristel Best Urday (Peru), Felix Weiss (Germany), Katharina Ochsendorf (Germany), Irene Izquieta (Spain), Paulina Martínez Larrain (Chile), Eulália Padró Giral (Spain), Manon Fenoy (France).

PROJECT STAFF:

Amaya de Miguel (coordinator), Kerstin Reemtsma (representative to the European Union), Mayte Quesada (administrator), Jacques van Luytelaar (financial supervisor), Paola Sarti (fundraiser), Silvia Weber (field support), Maike Holderer (responsible of formation), Erika Martínez (substitution for responsible of formation during her maternity leave).

PROJECTS CONSULTANTS:

Evangelina Scarfe (Ireland), Fermín Rodrigo (Spain), Cristina Barbeito (Spain).

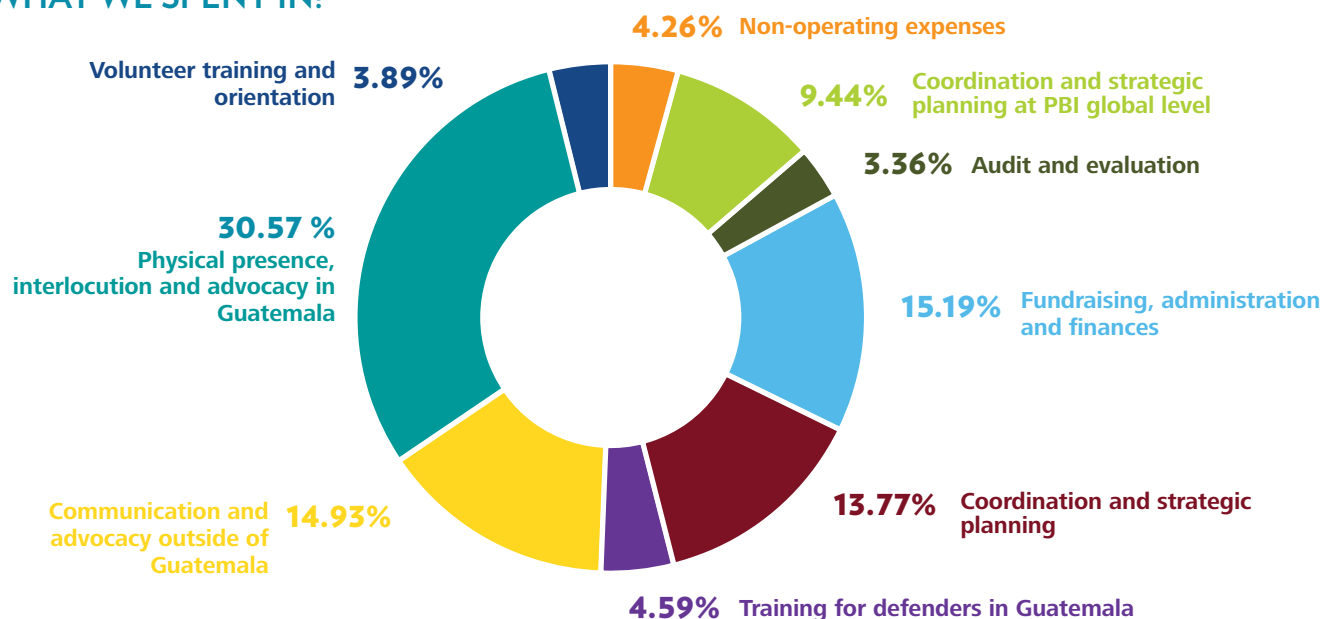
FINANCIAL REPORT 2017

During 2017, PBI Guatemala maintained a stable financial situation which allowed it to carry out all of the planned activities and even implement some activities not included in the annual budget. The expense budget for 2017 increased by 10% compared to the budget from the previous year and income increased by 11%. The number and variety of donors who support PBI in Guatemala has remained the same the last two years. At the close of 2017, we achieved a surplus of

3% which will be used, in part, to finance additional activities during 2018 and part to create a reserve fund that will allow the project to cover six months of operating expenses in 2017. Such reserves form part of good management practices of nonprofit entities and they are set forth in the financial norms by the PBI International office. Once reserves surpass six months of operational expenses, they are reduced by using them to cover operational expenses of the current year.

We thank all donors for their financial support which allows us to continue providing international accompaniment and protection for those who risk their lives to defend human rights in Guatemala.

WHAT WE SPENT IN?



EXPENSES PBI GUATEMALA

EUR

Volunteer training and orientation	14,516	3.9%
Physical presence, interlocution and advocacy in Guatemala	114,195	30.6%
Communication and advocacy outside of Guatemala	55,760	14.9%
Training for defenders in Guatemala	17,150	4.6%
Coordination and strategic planning	51,433	13.8%
Fundraising, administration and finances	56,727	15.2%
Audit and evaluation	12,561	3.4%
Coordination and strategic planning at PBI global level	35,250	9.4%
Non-operating expenses	15,906	4.3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	373,499	
INCOME MINUS EXPENSES	11,414	

*All of the expenditures and income presented in this report are in Euros and are under review in an external audit conducted by Guatemalan accounting firm Subuyuj Consultores – Contadores Públicos y Auditores.

INCOME PBI GUATEMALA		EUR
Income received in PBI bank accounts by donor		424.376
European Union	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)	24.797
Germany	Brot für die Welt / Pan para el Mundo	20.500
Germany	Misereor (213-600-1002 ZG)	41.000
Germany	ifa –Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (zivik Funding Programme)	81.712
Germany	Ziviler Friedensdienst (Servicio Civil para la Paz)	50.073
Belgium	Oxfam Solidarité	4.500
Canada	Unifor Social Justice Fund	CAD 10.000 6.630
Spain	Diputación de Córdoba	16.570
Spain	Diputación de Valladolid	27.300
Spain	Generalitat Valenciana - Associació Solidaritat Perifèries del Món	8.360
Spain	Agencia Vasca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo	34.550
United States	The Overbrook Foundation	USD 10.000 9.365
France	Non Violence XXI	3.600
Ireland	Trocaire, GUA 170223	35.000
Italy	Chiesa Evangelica Valdese. Uniones delle Chiese metodiste e valdesi	1.500
Mexico	Fundación Rosa Luxemburg	6.600
Netherlands	Duch Human Rights Fund	21.100
United Kingdom	Open Society Foundations	6.416
Switzerland	Berti Wicke Stiftung, Fédération Vaudoise de Coopération - Lausanne, Montreux, Renens, Montilliez y Treycovagnes, Jenö Stähelin Stiftung	CHF 28.252 24.805
Income already counted in 2016 / Donations receivable at end of 2016		-31.085
European Union	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)	-1.503
Germany	Misereor (213-600-1002 ZG)	-10.100
Germany	Ziviler Friedensdienst (Servicio Civil para la Paz)	-15.000
Spain	Generalitat Valenciana - Associació Solidaritat Perifèries del Món	-2.882
Mexico	Fundación Rosa Luxemburg	-1.600
Income received in 2017 to be spent in 2018		-30.244
Germany	Misereor (213-600-1002 ZG)	-1.760
Spain	Agencia Vasca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo	-5.650
Ireland	Trocaire, GUA 170223	-6.594
Netherlands	Duch Human Rights Fund	-18.000
Income from activities carried out in 2017 still receivable at end of year		14.365
European Union	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)	10.215
Germany	Ziviler Friedensdienst (Servicio Civil para la Paz)	1.000
Italy	Chiesa Evangelica Valdese. Uniones delle Chiese metodiste e valdesi	3.150
Income received in 2016, to be spent in 2017		6.819
Spain	Agencia Vasca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo	540
Ireland	Trocaire, GUA 140111/ GUA140204	3.417
United Kingdom	Open Society Foundations	2.862
Other Income		2.443
Individual Donors		1.493
Income for activities		900
Interest		50
TOTAL GENERAL INCOME		384.913

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		EUR
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		217.801
Commercial Debtors and Other Accounts Receivable		
Donations and y outstanding agreements		14.365
Accounts receivable PBI International Secretariat		32.467
Health insurance reimbursements receivable		3.808
Down payments and advances		5.982
Deposits		682
Total Commercial Debtors and Other Accounts Receivable		57.303
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		275.104
NONCURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Computer and communication equipment		10.899
Furnishings and fixtures		8.868
Accumulated depreciation		-16.536
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		3.231
TOTAL ASSETS		275.104
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Commercial creditors and other accounts payable		
Accounts payable to third party		16.513
Accounts payable to staff and volunteers		175
Accounts payable to other PBI entities		3.187
Total Commercial creditors and other accounts payable		19.875
Provisions		
Staff and volunteer benefits		2.809
Other Provisions		10.661
Total Provisions		13.470
Current tax liability		2.758
Other non-financial liabilities (Restricted funds to be executed)		32.004
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		68.108
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provision for Contingencies		77.800
TOTAL NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		77.800
EQUITY		
Funds free to execute, starting balance		117.783
Difference income and expenditures for period		11.414
TOTAL EQUITY		129.197
TOTAL LIABILITY AND EQUITY		275.104



BRIGADAS INTERNACIONALES
Pob
GUATEMALA
ACOMPANAMIENTO INTERNACIONAL

CONTACT US

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