



PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL – GUATEMALA PROJECT

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1. NOTES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

Tropical Storm Stan Tragedy

Executive presents preliminary analysis of the damages caused by Stan

Half the municipalities in the country have suffered damages with those worst affected in San Marcos, Sololá, Santa Rosa and Escuintla, stated Álvaro Aguilar, Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA).

Along with Roberto González, director of the Presidency and coordinator of the reconstruction programme, Aguilar revealed preliminary information of the analysis which will be the basis for the elaboration of the reconstruction programme. The report which was compiled by the Unit for Geographic Planning of the MAGA with information from other state entities reveals that infrastructure has been severely damaged with 847km of road still blocked, 1001km only passable with precaution and over eight river basins overflowed. In these areas emergency assistance is still required.

CONRED criticised

Experts, government officials and survivors have criticized the National Coordinating Body for the Reduction of Disasters (CONRED) for its lack of preventative measures, organization, delayed warning and slow reaction. All have stated that CONRED has not learned its lesson since the 1998 Hurricane Mitch – the devastation caused by Stan has resulted in far more deaths.

First outbreak of epidemics in affected areas

Health authorities have announced that various people temporarily lodged in shelters in Santo Domingo Suchitepéquez have been diagnosed with the malaria virus. In Santiago Atitlán three cases of hepatitis A have been reported as well as one of tuberculosis and one of chickenpox. Although health brigades are working in the area, the risk of the spreading of the epidemics is high given that there are five thousand people in shelters, among whom, some are already ill.

Member of Parliament denounces politicization of aid delivery

Nineth Montenegro, member of parliament for the group, Encuentro por Guatemala, submitted on 21 October various reports on the politicization of the delivery of aid to the victims of Stan. The reports were submitted to the Treasurer, Joaquín Flores España and the Executive of CONRED Hugo Hernández,

Impunity

Government acknowledges harassment of human rights defenders

The Government recognized the illegal entities and clandestine security apparatus are responsible for attacks and threats against some human rights activists. In a document, elaborated by the Presidential Commission for Human Rights (COPREDEH), it states that "without exception" human rights organizations suffer grave human rights abuses which vary from raids on their offices, the theft of documents, threats against the directors, torture and extrajudicial executions.

Calls on the IACHR to create a Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders

Organizations which defend fundamental human rights have called on the Inter American Commission for Human Rights to create a Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders. The request was made on 12 October by the Centre for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) and the Centre for Legal Action in Human Rights (CALDH) in the framework of the 123rd period of IACHR Sessions which take place in Washington, United States.

Supreme Court of Justice upholds sentencing of military implicated in the Xamán Case.

The Supreme Court of Justice confirmed the sentencing to 40 years imprisonment of 14 members of the military accused of the massacre in Xamán, Alta Verapaz on 5 October 1995.

Spain widens its jurisdiction following a request by Rigoberta Menchú

On 5 October the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled that it can hear cases of genocide and crimes against humanity committed in other countries even if no Spanish citizens have been involved. This decision follows a request presented in 1999 by Nobel Peace Prize Winner Rigoberta Menchú who called for an investigation into the murders, torture and illegal detentions during the armed conflict in Guatemala, including the burning of the Spanish Embassy in 1980 which resulted in the death of 34 people, 3 of whom were Spaniards.

Land

Agrarian Platform expresses solidarity with peasants in occupied estate

The Agrarian Platform has expressed its solidarity with a group of 26 peasants from the Movement of Rural Workers of San Marcos who on 26 September occupied the Estate of Las Delicias in Tumbador, San Marcos as a means of placing pressure on the estate owners to respect and conform to labour rights as well as the right to food of the workers.

Globalisation

USAC presents proposal for the Concessions Law

Luis Leal, rector of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala (USAC) submitted on the 19th October a proposal for the concessions law to Jorge Méndez Herbruger, president of the Legislative Assembly. Leal expressed his hope that the initiative would be taken into consideration and highlighted that it was based on consultations with various sectors of society through regional forums in Alta Verapaz, Suchitepéquez, Quetzaltenango and Chiquimula. In the proposal the concessions are under state controls and there is public access to information on the fiscal processes. It does not allow for the granting of concessions in health services, education, social security, water sources, the judicial administration or public security. It also prevents concessions being granted on the cultural and historic heritage of the country, on public recreation areas, nature reserves or protected areas, as well as the licensing of citizen identification documents.

Other

Director of OHCHR takes up position

Anders Kompass took on the role of director of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The principal mandate of the office is to advise the Government on policies which protect individual guarantees.

Sources: Prensa Libre, Siglo Veintiuno, El Periódico, Inforpress Centroamericana, La Semana en Guatemala, Informe Semanal Sobre Derechos Humanos.

2. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: WITHIN GUATEMALA

Team: Melosa Aiyana Granda (United States of America), Sander Otten (Netherlands), Matthew Fawcett and Helen Woodcock (United Kingdom), Silvio Köhler and Ulrike Beck (Germany), Estefanía Sarmiento (Colombia), Didier Califice (Belgium).

2.1 MEETINGS WITH GUATEMALAN AUTHORITIES AND MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Meetings with the authorities and members of the diplomatic corps in Guatemala are an essential component of PBI's work, strengthening the support for the project throughout the country. During the month of August meetings were held with the following authorities:

Guatemalan Authorities:

Hector Valenzuela, Director of the Inter-institutional Coordinator for the Attention of at risk Settlements, CIAAP
Rosa María Juárez, Responsable for Human Rights, National Civil Police (PNC)
Frank La Rue, President of the Executive Human Rights Coordinating Commission, COPREDEH
Francisco Tuyuc, Auxiliary Mayor of Xecoxol, Chimaltenango
Angel Montes Fajardo, National Civil Police (PNC) Station Chief, Tecpán, Chimaltenango
Crisanto Ulario Yac, Prosecutor Auxiliar, Public Prosecutor's Office (MP), Nebaj, Quiché
Mario Chamay, Auxiliary of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH), Nebaj, Quiché

Diplomatic Corps:

Troy Fitrell, Responsible for Human Rights and Labour Issues, United States Embassy
Maryse Guilbeault, Chief of the Political, Economic and Cultural Section, Canadian Embassy
Oscar Berger Widmann, Honorary Belgian Consul in Guatemala

2.2 MEETINGS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

The PBI Guatemala Project team holds regular meetings with civil society Organisations. This enables us to monitor the situation of human rights defenders and to exchange information on the work being carried out, as well as to gather information which helps us to develop our analysis of the internal political situation.

Civil Society Organisations:

Aura Elena Farfán, Families of the Detained and Disappeared of Guatemala, FAMDEGUA
José María Fernández Macho, Labour Institute for Development Cooperation, ISCOD
Francisco Mendoza, Friedrich Ebert Foundation
Carolina Enríquez, Labour Institute for Central America and the Caribbean, ISACC
Hermano Santiago Otero, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Guatemala
Hermana Raquel Zaragoza, Guatemalan Conference of Religious Men and Women, CONFREGUA
Edgar Romeo Euler, Project Leader and Kathy Fry, Senior Programme Officer Latin America, Mercy Corps.

International Organisations:

Forum of International Non-Governmental Organizations, FONGI
Jessica Yarrow, Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, NISGUA
Coordinating Body for International Accompaniment in Guatemala, CAIG

Courtesy visits were also made to the following Organisations:

Gustavo Meoño, office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, PDH
Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice In the Face of Indifference and Silence, H.I.J.O.S.
Technical Unit for Accompaniment, Relations and Consultation for the Social Movement of Guatemala, UTARA
Security and Democracy, SEDEM
Campesino Unity Committee, CUC
Defensoría Maya
Communities of Populations in Resistance-Sierra, CPR Sierra
Federation of Trade Unions in the Food and Similar Industries in Guatemala, FESTRAS
Center for Research and Popular Education, CIEP
General Office of Guatemalan Workers, CGTG
Conference of Evangelical Churches in Guatemala, CIEDEG

2.3 ACCOMPANIMENTS

Since the 13th of May we have accompanied Carlos Morales, leader of the **Union of Campesino Organisations for the Verapaces (UVOC)**. During the last month, we accompanied him during his activities in the Verapaces.

Background: Carlos Morales, leader of UVOC, has been victim of death threats, acts of intimidation, and persecution by unknown individuals. Due to a serious increase of personal death threats at the end of April 2005, which led to a genuine fear of his life, Carlos Morales was forced into hiding in Guatemala City for a month, following which he requested 24 hour accompaniment from Peace Brigades. UVOC is a campesino organisation from the Verapaces (the departments of Alta and Baja Verapaz) and works principally on the theme of access to land for campesinos and to provide support in the process of legalisation of the communities' titles to land. UVOC also offers training for communities affiliated to UVOC and supports development projects within those communities.

We continued to carry out regular visits to the office of the **National Coordination of Residents of Marginal Areas in Guatemala, CONAPAMG**.

Background: CONAPAMG works on the question of access to housing and services and the legalization of illegally occupied land. We've accompanied CONAPAMG since the 4th of July 2004, when their office was broken into and inventories, bills, computer discs and money were stolen. CONAPAMG's community leaders suffer threats by local actors regularly. In March of 2005 Miguel Zapeta González, resident and leader of the community "Esquipulas" in zone 21 of Guatemala City, was murdered. The communities of CONAPAMG are evicted frequently, while many more evictions are pending. PBI meets with Guatemalan authorities in the local zones where there are CONAPAMG communities.

We accompanied **Eloyda Mejía**, Legal Representative of the **Association of Friends of Lake Izabal (AFLI)** in her activities in the town of El Estor in the Department of Izabal. During the month of October we held a meeting with her in which we analyzed her current security situation.

Background: Eloyda Mejia has suffered a number of threats as a result of her work to protect Lake Izabal, in the province of Izabal, East Guatemala, as well as of her work to inform local residents of the possible damaging effects of the re-opening of the Guatemalan Nickel Company (subsidiary of Skye Resources INC, Canada) mining operation in the area. We began accompanying Eloyda shortly after a forum on the future of the lake, which took place in El Estor on 21 February, 2004.

We carried out regular visits to the offices of the **Madre Selva Collective** and had frequent contact with their members. During October we accompanied members during their visit to Sipacapa, San Marcos.

Background: Madre Selva is an environmental organisation which holds regular workshops on the negative impact of mega-projects and in particular those involving open cast mining and the installation of hydroelectric power plants. Members of the organisation regularly receive threats because of their work. We have provided accompaniment to Madre Selva since June of 2004.

We have been accompanying the Union of Workers of the company "**Association of the Coffee Industry**", and other related **Industries, SITINCA**. Since June of 2005 we have acted as international observers during their various protests against the unfair dismissal of José Armando Palacios and the situation of workers in the INCASA factory in Guatemala City.

Background: In January of the 2004, three workers of the company's internal security decided to join the trade union. Since then the company has allegedly carried out anti-union activities, focused on José Armando Palacios, who was one of the three workers. On the 16 April, unknown armed individuals broke into the house of José Armando Palacios and threatened the life of his wife and their two children. They asked for Mr. Palacios, whom they wanted "to kill for being in the union." On the 6 of May, Mr. Palacios was dismissed without any explanation.

We continue to accompany the **Coordination of Widows of Guatemala, CONAVIGUA**. During this month we carried out regular visits to their office and also accompanied them during an exhumation in the community of Xecoxol, Tecpán, Chimaltenango.

Background: CONAVIGUA continues to facilitate the process of exhumations and inhumations in various departments throughout Guatemala, largely in Quiché, Chimaltenango and the Verapaces as part of their efforts to recuperate the collective memory of Guatemala's recent history.

We accompany the **Union of Bocadeli Workers (SITRA Bocadeli)**, which is affiliated to the **Syndicated Guatemalan Workers Union (UNSITRAGUA)**. In October the workers maintained a 10 day presence in front of the Presidential Palace asking the President to meet with them.

Background: In August the Bocadeli Foods Prefabricated Products Distribution Centre in Mixco, Department of Guatemala, was shut down without any notice being given and without the workers being paid either their salaries or indemnification. Ever since the closure the workers have maintained a constant presence day and night in front of the factory to prevent the removal of goods or vehicles for sale before they receive monies to which they are entitled. Meanwhile, various vehicles with darkened windows have been circling the workers in a threatening manner. As yet the Salvadorian owned Bocadeli has not responded to the Union initiative to open a dialogue over the dispute. UNSITRAGUA have brought the case before the International Labour Organisation.

We accompanied the **Indigenous Municipality of Sololá** and the **Mayan Foundation, FUNDAMAYA**. The Indigenous Mayoress of Sololá, **Dominga Vásquez** and a **Carlos Guarquez** of FUNDAMAYA have received PBI accompaniment since January of 2005. During October Carlos Guárquez received accompaniment for many of his activities related with the tragedy caused by hurricane Stan.

Background: On the 11th of January 2005 in the Department of Sololá, serious confrontations took place between the National Civil Police, supported by the Guatemalan Army, and the communities of Sololá who were protesting against the transportation of a cylinder (which was to be used for mining purposes) through their villages, leaving one person dead and over 30 injured. Following this, government authorities issued an arrest warrant against five community leaders and representatives of the Indigenous Municipality of Sololá, including the Indigenous Mayoress, Dominga Vásquez. The Indigenous Municipality is a non-governmental body representing indigenous communities in Sololá, which works to defend the rights of the Maya – including the right to speak their own language and to practice their traditional ceremonies and customs – as well as to ensure the development of the communities. On 25 March of 2005 in the village of El Tablón, Sololá, the vehicle used by Carlos Humberto Guárquez, of FUNDAMAYA, was doused in petrol and set on fire by unknown individuals. Death threats specifically naming Carlos Guárquez, Dominga Vásquez and her husband, Alfonso Guárquez, were found scattered around the vehicle. Part of the threat stated: “For your stupid meddling in society, tomorrow will be the day of your disappearance from this world.” As a result of this threat we decided to activate our Support Network, during the last days of March, April and the beginning of May. Dominga Vásquez has recently suffered intimidation and accusations that she is a violent extremist, from various other Guatemalan Authorities for her opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) as well as proposed new mining operations.

2.4 OBSERVATIONS

We were present as International Observer during the march to commemorate the day of the revolution on the 20th of October. The march through Guatemala City began in the area of El Trebol and finished with a rally in the Central Square. Diverse sections of civil society were represented during the event.

2.5 FOLLOW UP

We have maintained contact with the **Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH)** through meetings with their Co-directors and visits to their office.

Background: On various occasions we have accompanied various members of the organisation which is constantly under threat. During the month of June, four members of the organisation were subject to attacks and acts of aggression and the organisation continues to receive threatening telephone calls and is under frequent surveillance.

We continue to maintain contact with members of the **Community of El Maguey**, affiliated with the **Campesino Unity Committee (CUC)** through frequent contact and occasional visits.

Background: After a violent evacuation of the community by the army in April 2003 a Governmental Decree withdrawing the community's right to the land was issued. This Decree was appealed before the Constitutional Court which, in May 2004, decided in favour of the community. Reconstruction of the community has begun, but they continue waiting for the finalization of their title to the land.

2.6 TALLER DE COYUNTURA

Between the 16th and 22nd of October the PBI Guatemala team was visited by Maria Serra, one of the project advisers. During her time here we renewed contact with various organisations known during the 1980s and 90s and held meetings with various of the country's governmental and non-governmental organisations. Additionally Maria also carried out a workshop on analyzing current political events based on her 20 years experience of Guatemala.

3. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: OUTSIDE OF GUATEMALA

In Spain: On the 14th of October Montserrat García, Coordinator of the PBI Guatemala Project and Mayte Quesada, Project Administrator, participated along with other NGOs in a meeting with the Foreign Ministry in Madrid, called by its Human Rights Office, to discuss the position of the Spanish Government in relation to the 3rd Commission of the UN, responsible for, among other things, social issues and human rights.

On the 19th of October Montserrat García, Coordinator of the PBI Guatemala Project, participated in two meetings in Alicante. The first in the University of Alicante and the other in the Press Club alongside Guatemalan human rights defender Miguel Ángel Albizures of the Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH), who spoke about the situation of human rights in Guatemala and about the effects of hurricane Stan, the result of serious structural problems.

On the 24th of October Montserrat García, Coordinator of the PBI Guatemala Project, alongside Guatemalan human rights defender Miguel Ángel Albizures of the Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH), met in Madrid with Gracia Santos, Director of Paz y Solidaridad, to talk about labour and human rights in Guatemala.

In Brussels: Between the 25th and 26th of October Montserrat García, Coordinator of the PBI Guatemala Project and Kerstin Reemtsma, the Project's Representative for Europe alongside Guatemalan human rights defender Miguel Ángel Albizures of the Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH) met with the following organisations:

- European Commission: Eric Beaume, Foreign Relations Desk Guatemala.
- International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU): Manuela Chávez, Americas Office.
- European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC): Juan Moreno, International Relations Representative of ETUC and Adviser to the European Social y Economics Committee.
- World Confederation of Labour (WCL): Eduardo Estévez, Secretary General.
- Copenhagen Initiative for Central America y Mexico (CIFCA): meeting with various member organisations of CIFCA and with the group's Executive.

In these meetings the situation of labour and human rights in Guatemala was discussed.

In Bonn: On the 28th of October Kerstin Reemtsma, Guatemala Project's Representative for Europe, met with various German Governmental y non-governmental organisations and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development to discuss the plans for cooperation with Guatemala.

In Canada: On the 4th and 5th of October Tara Ward, Guatemala Project Representative for North America, attended a meeting in Ottawa of the Americas Policy Group (APG) along with 15 other member organisations present.

She also participated, along with various other organisations, in a meeting with members of the Political Parties Bloc Québécois and the New Democrat Party, about the impacts of CAFTA.

In Toronto she took part in a presentation along with Amnesty International and an interview with the Toronto University radio station.

Contact was maintained with the Canadian Auto-Workers Union (CAW) around the theme of labour rights in Guatemala.

4. PUBLICATIONS BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (IN SPANISH)

In this section we publish several communiqués written by human rights organisations in which they express their preoccupations regarding the current state of affairs in Guatemala.

EL GRUPO DE APOYO MUTUO SALUDA A LA REVOLUCIÓN DE OCTUBRE

Hoy se están cumpliendo 61 años de que se consumara la gloriosa revolución de octubre. Fue el inicios de una década de primavera democrática, en la que el pueblo estuvo representado en quienes gobernaban de una manera real y directa.

Tanto Juan José Arévalo como Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán gobernaron a favor de la población y no en protección de intereses de unos pocos. Múltiples fueron las conquistas sociales que se alcanzaron durante este periodo, el desarrollo del país era ejemplo para el mundo entero.

Sin embargo los enemigos del desarrollo, se oponían a que un pequeño pueblo como el guatemalteco tuviera libertad, democracia y mayor igualdad. Esos gobiernos fueron agredidos desde el extranjero. Estados Unidos y sus satélites invirtieron muchos millones de dólares en comprar conciencias especialmente

dentro de las fuerzas armadas, que inmediatamente se alinearon con la potencia más grande del planeta.

Mercenarios apoyados por Estados Unidos invadieron Guatemala desde Honduras, abortando la primavera democrática e imponiendo el estado del terror y las violaciones a los derechos humanos.

Solamente entre 1954 año de la contrarrevolución y 1960 se cometieron aproximadamente 30 mil asesinatos políticos, dirigidos en contra de todos aquellos que se habían puesto a la cabeza de los cambios revolucionarios que se promovían desde el Estado.

150 mil personas fueron brutalmente asesinadas, 45 mil mas fueron capturadas ilegalmente y desaparecidas a lo largo de cuatro décadas. El estado de terror que se impuso con la contrarrevolución todavía en la actualidad está cobrando vidas de guatemaltecos, debido a que quienes impulsaron el terrorismo de Estado, en la actualidad dirigen las bandas de narcotráfico, secuestro de personas, contrabando, robo de vehículos, tráfico de personas, adopciones ilegales, venta de clorato de potasio y toda aquella actividad que les represente ingresos millonarios.

Sus tentáculos están en todas las instituciones del Estado garantizando de esa manera la impunidad total a sus actos.

El GRUPO DE APOYO MUTUO llama a las autoridades, para que impulse las políticas de seguridad que garanticen la seguridad y el desarrollo de los guatemaltecos, combatiendo a esos grupos que siguen amparándose en la impunidad y que han sido responsables del desangramiento de los guatemaltecos por mas de medio siglo. El GRUPO DE APOYO MUTUO saluda a la revolución y llama a la población a continuar luchando porque no se reduzcan muchas de las conquistas sociales de la revolución que aún hoy siguen presentes.

Guatemala 20 de octubre de 2005

COMUNICADO DE PRENSA.

EMPRESA MINERA DESTRUYE TIERRAS DE TREINTA Y CUATRO COMUNIDADES MAYAS USPANTECA Y ACHIES

Defensoría Maya, que trabaja por la Defensa de los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas y los Derechos Humanos, hace del conocimiento de la opinión pública nacional e internacional, treinta y cuatro comunidades mayas del Municipio de San Miguel Uspantán y Cubulco ambos en los departamentos de el Quiché y de Baja Verapaz, hacen presencia hoy en día en la ciudad capital para conversar con altas autoridades del Organismo Ejecutivo, sobre actividades mineras de la "Empresa Montaña" que en estos momentos explotan Recursos Minerales en la cumbre del Cerro CHIMIA GUA en dichos municipios y utilizan helicópteros para trasladar materiales con que destruyen bosques, ríos y de mas recursos naturales.

En Asamblea Comunal realizada en estas comunidades dejan en constancia en actas respectivas su rechazo total a las actividades de dicha Empresa que solamente buscan despojar tierras indígenas y destruir la cultura, rompen la relación íntima con la madre tierra y su esencia espiritual. A sí mismo se hace saber al presidente de la República Oscar Berger y su aparato de Estado, que el pueblo de Uspantán no permitirá a ningún intruso ya sea nacional o extranjera que buscan apropiarse de sus tierras y extraer recursos naturales.

Su rechazo absoluto a la Ley de Minería del país, que lejos de buscar desarrollo para la nación, regalan las tierras y recursos a empresas mineras que especulan desarrollo y empleo, la realidad es que fomentan mas pobreza, destrucción a la cultura y al medio ambiente, en términos generales las leyes o políticas del Estado actual son mas que una política entreguista y demagógica

También su rechazo a la Ley de Concesiones Generales que el Congreso y el Ejecutivo vienen impulsando con el fin de seguir privatizando las instituciones y las funciones del Estado, así como también los Recursos Naturales de la

Madre Tierra, actitud que transgrede y quebranta la Constitución Política de Guatemala, misma que estipula en sus principios de que el Estado es el garante para brindar bienestar y proteger a todos los ciudadanos, sin distinción ni exclusión alguna.

Los empresarios en el gobierno, encabezados por el Presidente Oscar Berger tienen la intención de saquear las arcas nacionales a través de la Ley de Concesiones generales, ley que garantizará a las empresas privadas, nacionales y transnacionales, adueñarse de los servicios públicos, que generan ganancias, mismas que quedarán en manos de dichas empresas.

Actualmente, el gobierno pretende engañar a la población guatemalteca y a la opinión pública internacional, una supuesta consulta a determinadas personalidades, pero cuya intención es únicamente lograr el “respaldo” a sus pretensiones.

Las Comunidades del pueblo de Uspantan consideran que el tema de las CONCESIONES es la privatización de las instituciones del Estado, el despojo de nuestra madre tierra y sus recursos naturales, debe pasar por una Consulta Comunitaria o popular, que siga los mecanismos oficiales establecidos, porque como se afirmó anteriormente, transgrede la Constitución Política de la República.

La ley de Minería y de Concesiones no es más que el debilitamiento del Estado y su destrucción paulatina, porque la visión empresarial del presidente de la república es únicamente beneficiar a la clase poderosa, entregándoles sin restricción las tierras y recursos naturales, como ocurre hoy en día en las tierras del cerro CHIMIAGUA de San Miguel Uspantan y de Cubulco Baja Verapaz.

El pueblo de Uspantan y de Cubulco exige lo siguiente:

1. El gobierno de la República de Oscar Berger suspenda de inmediato a la empresa Montana u otras que realizan actividades de exploración o explotación de los recursos minerales de la madre naturaleza en las comunidades y municipios mencionados.
2. Que el gobierno y el Estado respete los derechos de posesión sobre las tierras indígenas y poner fin a todos los contratos con las empresas que buscan explotar recursos naturales, porque no quieren conflictos con nadie, de lo contrario harán uso los derechos de defensa de sus tierras y territorios.
3. Que el Estado debe respetar el resultado de las Consultas Comunitarias realizadas en varios municipios, y que fortalezca el mismo a efecto de seguir la consulta al pueblo de Guatemala sobre los asuntos que los afecte y sobre todo las leyes destructivas.
4. El pueblo de Uspantan hace un llamado a todas las organizaciones de diversa índole, de la sociedad civil para que se unan y exijamos juntos el planteamiento propuesto por nuestras comunidades, de hacer una consulta comunitaria o popular sobre las intenciones del Estado de explotar recursos naturales en tierras indígenas. Consideramos que los recursos naturales en tierras indígenas solo puede ser discutido con ellos; nadie puede abrogar el derecho de decidir en los asuntos que pertenecen en tierras indígenas.

Guatemala 19 de de octubre del 2005

COMUNIDADES AFECTADAS:

Aldea el Palmar; Ojo de Agua Palmar; El Matazano; Aldea Sicache; Caserío la Balam; Ojo de Agua Camino Real; Cantón Palqui; Caserío Chocox; Aldea Los Tapescos; Agua Colorado; Loma del Cal; Chitac, Caserío la PAC; Caserío Pantzac; Primer Centro Chotom; Segundo Centro Chotom; Caserío Xolalbarda; El Jocote; Sector los Ramírez; Sector Los Reyes; Sector los Zetino; Comunidad Chiramos, Comunidad Chivaquito; Caserío Putuy; Río Negro; Comunidad los Encuentros; El Cebollal; Aldea Chicalan; Aldea la Esperanza; El Platanar; Los Tunales; Las Hieba Buenas; Aldea el Carizal; y Santo Tomás

DESPUÉS DEL HURACÁN, URGE SENTAR LAS BASES DE UNA TRANSFORMACIÓN PROFUNDA, EN BENEFICIO DEL PUEBLO.

En medio de la tragedia causado por el huracán STAN, conmemoramos 61 año de la revolución del 20 de octubre que nos dejó un ejemplo vivo del primer levantamiento de este pueblo que soñó con libertad, dignidad humana y el derecho al desarrollo rural integral, desde la Reforma Agraria Integral y el reconocimiento al territorio. A pesar del corto tiempo que duró esta revolución, se vieron transformaciones sociales profundas para los trabajadores, el pueblo oprimido y explotado, los pueblos indígenas y campesinos.

Una vez más se desnuda nuestra triste realidad, las corrientadas botó los muros o se llevó las casas miserables del humilde trabajador y trabajadora, a pesar de trabajar de sol a sol, no ha podido construir una vivienda lo suficiente fuerte para que lo proteja de todo peligro, mucho menos construir en lugares seguros, el hacinamiento en las comunidades se puede ver más claro. Los y las que murieron, perdieron viviendas, terrenos, fueron los más pobres. Por otro lado, la naturaleza puso a flor de tierra la corrupción con que se ha construido la infraestructura del país, si los puentes y carreteras se destruyeron, muchos de ellos por la mala construcción y sin lógica de seguridad, sin embargo están contabilizados a precios millonarios, que han llegado a parar en los bolsillos de los funcionarios.

Hoy por hoy seguimos la lucha incansablemente para exigir cambios profundos que necesita nuestro pueblo. Es el momento oportuno para dar la oportunidad a los y las desposeídas, a los pequeños productores y productoras, artesanos, albañiles, jornaleros, comerciantes que perdieron todo. No podemos seguir manteniendo a este pueblo en la extrema pobreza, ni en la pobreza, tiene derecho a vivir dignamente.

No podemos culpar el huracán STAN, de los grandes efectos que dejó en el aumento de la hambruna, pobreza y extrema pobreza, especialmente en el área rural. Los culpables directos son las grandes empresas nacionales y transnacionales que destruyeron extensiones inmensas de bosques, la agricultura extensiva y de agro exportación, el uso excesivos de los químicos contaminantes de la madre naturaleza, el uso de las armas y bombas nucleares de exterminio masivo. El calentamiento de la tierra se debe a la concentración de riquezas sin límite. Si bien es cierto a los pequeños productores nos señalan de ser parte de esta destrucción, por la ampliación de la frontera agrícola, sin embargo es por nuestra sobre vivencia y por que el sistema nos ha arrinconado en tierra infértiles e insuficientes para vivir.

Demandamos al gobierno y sus instituciones de asumir con seriedad la responsabilidad de la reconstrucción del país y no solo atender las regiones donde se ubican los intereses empresariales. Debe tomar en cuenta que los y las indígenas y campesinas, ladinos y ladinas pobres, la población del área rural, somos partes de Guatemala. Porque desde que empezó a generalizarse el desastre el 5 de Octubre, hasta la fecha, a penas 15 días, se han visto acciones y actitudes racistas, excluyentes, políticas partidistas de parte del gobierno. NO es justo, ni humano, que se beneficien a personas de las fincas cuando el finquero tiene la obligación de atender a sus trabajadores, a quien le han servido y dado el sudor convertido en ganancias. NO es justo, ni humano que en la costa sur se estén invirtiendo las grandes cantidades de dinero para el reestablecimiento de la infraestructura, mientras en el altiplano donde vivimos una tercera parte de la población nacional, en su mayoría de origen maya se esté dejando en segundo plano. Hoy mas que nunca se ve la necesidad la urgente de impulsar la Reforma Agraria para resolver de fondo los problemas estructurales de nuestra sociedad. Esperamos que la inversión productiva no se vaya solo para los empresarios, se debe contemplar en los planes el apoyo a los pequeños productores de granos básicos, frutas, verduras, aves de corral, ganado menor, y otras actividades. Si las tierras de producción quedaron afectadas se les debe dotar de tierra, para garantizar la alimentación de los guatemaltecos y guatemaltecas, la importación de granos básicos y otros alimentos no debe ser el camino, se debe apoyar a los pequeños productores, que siempre hemos dado de comer al pueblo de Guatemala. Se debe priorizar la construcción de viviendas dignas a las familias que se quedaron sin vivienda, con todos los servicios básicos (escuelas, agua potable, luz, y otros). Tampoco dejar de lado la cosmovisión de los pueblos indígena, principalmente al pueblo Maya, hay que acompañar en el luto, el dolor, el susto, el miedo, hay que dotar de recursos para reencontrarse.

A la comunidad y cooperación internacional, tomar muy en cuenta las tareas de reconstrucción del país, enumeradas arriba, por lo tanto fiscalizar esta inversión, tomar en cuenta los antecedentes de corrupción en que han caído los gobernantes y sus funcionarios, el racismo y exclusión que estamos señalando.

A las hermanas y hermanos que no fueron afectados por el desastre, organizados y no organizados, de las ciudades, jóvenes y estudiantes, participemos todos y todas en la reconstrucción. Coordinemos con las comunidades y sus organizaciones. Es el momento de reencontrarnos, de ver de cerca el nivel de pobreza que viven nuestros hermanos y familias afectadas. Organicémonos para participar en esta noble tarea, para que tomemos conciencia de nuestra realidad.

A las comunidades de base miembros de CONIC, a fortalecer nuestra organización para apoyar a nuestros hermanos y hermanas en esta emergencia y participar activamente en la reconstrucción de las comunidades afectadas. Debemos reflexionar internamente el por qué del desastre, cuánta responsabilidad tenemos nosotros mismos y cómo debemos corregir estos errores. En adelante debemos asumir el compromiso de impulsar una agricultura orgánica o natural, acorde con la madre tierra y naturaleza. Significa sembrar árboles frutales y maderables, para evitar la erosión y recuperar la calidad del suelo. Construyamos una vida más digna y humana.

Agradecemos la solidaridad recibida de personas, familias, agrupaciones, instituciones, comunidades de manera desinteresada, para atender la emergencia. Hemos canalizado más de 15 camionadas de alimentos, ropa, agua, medicina a las familias damnificadas en Sololá, Chimaltenango y en la Costa Sur del país. Aún estamos atendiendo la

emergencia, queremos empezar a trabajar la reconstrucción, seguimos necesitando de su apoyo, solidaridad y acompañamiento. El trabajo aún es largo. Después del primer paso, no pararemos de andar jamás.

COORDINADORA NACIONAL INDÍGENA Y CAMPESINA CONIC.

Miembro de CNO C, UASP, MICSP, Waq'ib Kej, CLOC y Vía Campesina Internacional.

Guatemala, 20 de octubre, 2005.

5. PHOTOS



Acompanied CONAVIGUA during an exhumation in the Community of Xecoxol



The people of Sololá helping bring aid to the victims of hurricane Stan.



Members of Sitrabocadeli in front of the Presidential Palace.



Reconstruction of basic infrastructure after hurricane Stan.

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