



## PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL – GUATEMALA PROJECT

### Monthly Information Package – Guatemala

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#### 1. NOTES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

##### Impunity

##### **CC rejects injunction in Gerardi case**

On 9<sup>th</sup> March the Court of Constitutionality (CC) refused to grant a provisional injunction in favour of Captain Byron Lima Oliva, condemned to 10 years' imprisonment for complicity in the assassination of Bishop Juan José Gerardi. The military officer had lodged the injunction against the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ), which ruled to confirm the sentence. Lima argued that the CSJ had violated his rights by not having accepted the requested cassation against the Second Court of Appeal, which confirmed his sentence. The captain was found guilty of complicity in the assassination together with his father Colonel Byron Lima Estrada and the priest Mario Orantes, to whom the CC also refused the requested injunction against the sentence.

##### **Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders denounces increase in attacks**

On 13<sup>th</sup> March the Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders of the National Movement for Human Rights (MNDH) denounced that it has already counted 30 attacks against activists this year already. Members of the National Civil Police (PNC) figure amongst the few aggressors who have been identified. One of the cases mentioned is that of the Director of the Organisation to Support an Integrated Sexuality to Confront AIDS (OASIS), Jorge Luís López, who was pursued by a police car belonging to the National Civil Police on 22<sup>nd</sup> January this year. The organisation has reported that many of the acts of aggression aimed at sex workers are committed by members of the police force. The list of attacks also includes Fredy Peccerelli, Director of the Foundation of Forensic Anthropology (FAFG), who, together with two members of his family, received death threats by telephone and by letter. The foundation is responsible for exhumations of victims of the armed conflict.

##### **CC strips Members of Parliament involved in disturbances of 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2003 of their immunity**

The Court of Constitutionality (CC) ruled to confirm the withdrawal of immunity from the Members of Parliament of the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), Juan Santa Cruz Cu and Leopoldo Cruz Claveria, for the incidents of 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2003. The injunction, which the CC refused, had been solicited by the Members of Parliament to avoid investigation for their possible involvement in the disturbances led by FRG mobs during which the journalist Héctor Ramírez died. The Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) had requested that they be investigated for alleged responsibility in organising the events led by members of the FRG in various parts of the capital during which they demanded the inscription of Efraín Ríos Montt as presidential candidate.

## Land

### **Evicted *campesinos* denounce discrimination and racism**

Inhabitants of the property named Tampama, part of the La Moca estate, located in Senahú, Alta Verapaz, made an official complaint to the Presidential Commission against Discrimination and Racism against Indigenous Peoples (CODISRA). The Presidential Commissioner of CODISRA, Blanca Estela Alvarado, said in a press conference that the situation of the *campesinos* is tense as they have been ordered to leave the property to which they returned after their expulsion on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006. 125 members of the indigenous community have fallen ill and one leader committed suicide as a result of the pressure exerted by the owner of the La Moca estate, Roberto Hempstead, and his security staff. Mateo Yat Caal, one of the leaders of the *campesinos* of La Moca, suspects that their water sources have been contaminated, as 125 persons have fallen seriously ill in recent days. Alvarado has requested that the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP), the Labour Inspectorate, the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (PDH), the justice system, the National Civil Police (PNC), and the Ministry of the Interior inform on this matter.

## Globalisation

### **High Level Commission returns to dialogue on mining**

The High Level Commission for mining issues announced it will return to the dialogue table as the "differences" that caused the cessation of dialogue "had been resolved". Monsignor Ramazzini, Bishop of San Marcos, President of the Episcopal Conference of Guatemala, and member of the High Level Commission, indicated that consensus had been reached, tending towards the promotion of a new mining law and the solution of the problems generated by this type of activity in *campesino* communities; however, the governmental party to the negotiation did not comply with what had been agreed. In a meeting between the members of the previously mentioned Commission and members of Congress, the latter promised to bring to a plenary session a draft bill to authorise the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM) to refuse licences for inspection, exploration and exploitation of non-renewable resources for nine months, as the negotiating party had proposed, contrary to what the governmental sector had sought. The legislator Lucrecia de Palomo put in doubt the supposed benefits that mining could bring to the country, and requested that the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), whose delegates were also present in the meeting, exercise tighter control over zones where precious metals are extracted. Monsignor Ramazzini asked that the draft bill include aspects of the document "Guidelines for a Mining Policy", agreed by the High Level Commission and the MEM, and said that "the Congress of the Republic should show that it is interested in the well-being of the country when working on the reform of the mining regulations."

## Others

### **UNDP: Guatemala is still far behind average levels of human development in Latin America**

The National Report on Human Development 2005 of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) presented March 14<sup>th</sup>, points out that Guatemala at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is still far behind Latin American averages for human development indicators, and in order to reach this goal an inclusive Guatemalan state is necessary. The report, entitled "Ethnic-Cultural Diversity: Citizenship in a Plural State", highlights the inequality between the indigenous and the ladino population in health, education, and economic situation. The study indicates that although enrolment in primary education has risen from 64% of children of school age to 89% between 1990 and 2003, the figure is still one of the lowest on the continent. The report also documents that economic differences and inequalities related to ethnicity and gender continue to be marked, manifesting themselves in terms of distribution of income generated in the country as well as in the access to resources and inputs necessary to participate productively. In the field of political participation it reports that access to political space and resources is unequal between ethnic-cultural groups, and adds that although at a local level the number of indigenous authorities could be considered significant, this aspect is not reproduced with the same swiftness at a national level. After the general elections in 2003, only 8% of the Members of Parliament elected were indigenous; the same situation occurs in the executive committees of political parties, where indigenous participation is scarce. The UNDP emphasises the necessity of implementing a policy of ethnic equality in the State to be applied to all areas of development and participation which would imply changes in the distribution of power; in the structure of institutions; the way in which policies are implemented; and in the assignation of public resources. The report also acknowledges that advances have been made in criminal law as a reform to the Penal Code was made classifying discrimination as a crime.

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

## 2. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: WITHIN GUATEMALA

**Team:** Silvio Köhler (Germany), Estefanía Sarmiento (Colombia), Didier Califice (Belgium), Ulrike Beck (Germany), Tawia Abbam (United Kingdom), Chus García (Spain), Michael Beattie (Australia), Silke Gatermann (Sweden/Germany) and Katia Aeby (Switzerland).

### 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, enabling us to make known our objectives and way of working. Through these meetings, when necessary, we can also express confidentially our concerns over critical situations about which we have first hand knowledge through our work in the field. During the month of March meetings were held with the following authorities:

Guatemalan Authorities:

- Myrna Ponce, President of the Congressional Commission on Human Rights
- Jorge Macúa Caal, Municipal Coordinator of El Estor, Izabal
- Chief of the Substation of El Estor, Izabal, National Civil Police (PNC)
- Axel Humberto López Anzuetto, Governor of San Marcos
- Mario Estrada y Estrada, Assistant to the Governor of Jutiapa
- Selwin Rafael Cambera Cambera, Chief of the Substation of El Progreso, Jutiapa, National Civil Police (PNC)
- Elmer Guerra, Representative of the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (PDH) for Jutiapa
- Marco Tulio Álvarez y Azarias Perencén, Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (PDH)
- Rosa María Salazar, Chief Prosecutor for Human Rights; and Hans Aaron Noriega Salazar, Public Prosecutor for Human Rights, Public Prosecutor's Office (MP)

Diplomatic Corps:

- Eric Beaume, Desk Officer for El Salvador y Guatemala, European Commission
- Tobias Lorentzson, Second Secretary, Embassy of Sweden
- Olivier Gilles de Pelichy, Ambassador of Belgium to Central America
- Maryse Guilbeault, Head of Political, Economic and Cultural Affairs, Embassy of Canada
- Manuel Morodo, Assistant Consul, Consulate of México

### 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:

- National Human Rights Movement (MNDH)
- Justo Mendoza, National Coordinating Body of Indigenous and *Campesino* Organisations (CONIC)
- Efrín Sandoval, Guatemalan Workers Union (UNSITRAGUA)
- Carlos Paredes, Community Studies and Psychosocial Action Team (ECAP)
- Hugo Leonel Garrido, Conference of Evangelical Churches in Guatemala (CIEDEG)
- María Domingo, Alliance of Rural Women
- Walter Valencia, Technical Unit for Accompaniment, Relations and Consultation for the Social Movement of Guatemala (UTARA)
- Alfredo Che, Coordinating Body of *Campesino* and Indigenous Organisations of Petén (COCIP)
- Norma Cruz, Survivors
- Security in Democracy (SEDEM)
- Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH)
- *Campesino* Development Committee (CODECA)

## International Organisations

- Coordinating Body for International Accompaniment in Guatemala (CAIG)
- Commission on Accompaniment of Human Rights Defenders (CADDH) of the Forum of International Non-Governmental Organisations (FONGI)
- Bernard Galabert and Anne Boucher of PBI France
- Roberto Perillo, US Leap
- David Alvarado, Solidarity Centre
- Anabella Sibrián, Dutch Platform against Impunity in Guatemala

Courtesy visits were also paid to the following organisations:

- Citizens' Coordination of Sexual Diversity
- Mama Maquín (rural women's organisation)
- United Union and Popular Action (UASP)

## 2.3 ACCOMPANIMENTS

Since 13th May we have accompanied **Carlos Morales**, leader of the **Union of Campesino Organisations for the Verapaces (UVOC)**, and other members of the organisation. Throughout the last month, we accompanied them during their activities in Alta and Baja Verapaz, and in Guatemala City.

*Background: Carlos Morales, leader of the 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 for his life, Carlos Morales was forced into hiding in Guatemala City for a month, which was made possible by the support of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH). Following this, 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 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 continue being in permanent contact with the **National Coordination of Residents of Marginal Areas in Guatemala (CONAPAMG)**, carrying out regular visits to its office, as well as accompanying the organisation to meetings in the capital.

*Background: CONAPAMG works on the question of access to housing and services and the legalisation of illegally occupied land. We have accompanied CONAPAMG since 4<sup>th</sup> July 2004, when their office was broken into and inventories, bills, computer discs and money were stolen. CONAPAMG's community leaders suffer from threats on a regular basis. In March of 2005 Miguel Zapeta González, resident and leader of the community "Esquipulas" in zone 21 of Guatemala City, was murdered. Many of the communities that CONAPAMG supports are evicted frequently, and for others there are many more evictions pending. PBI meets with Guatemalan authorities in the local zones where there are CONAPAMG communities that are negotiating either accessor purchase of the land that they occupy.*

We have been accompanying the **Association of Friends of Lake Izabal (ASALI)** and **Eloyda Mejía**, Legal Representative of the organisation, since 21<sup>st</sup> February 2004, when the threats against her worsened. This month we accompanied **Rodolfo Mencos**, an active member of the association, during his activities in El Estor.

*Background: Eloyda Mejía has suffered a number of threats as a result of her work to protect Lake Izabal, in the province of Izabal, East Guatemala, and due to 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. On 21<sup>st</sup> February 2004, during a conference on the future of the lake in El Estor, Izabal, the threats against her worsened, which she reported to the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) and the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (PDH).*

We carry out regular visits to the offices of the **Madre Selva Collective** and have frequent contact with their members. PBI has been accompanying members of Madre Selva since June 2004. During the month of March 2006, we accompanied José Manuel Chacón in his visits to Asunción Mita, Jutiapa.

*Background: Madre Selva is an environmental organisation which holds regular workshops on the negative impact of mega-projects and in particular those involving open caste mining and the installation of hydroelectric power plants. Members of the organisation regularly receive threats because of their work.*

We continue to accompany the **National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala (CONAVIGUA)** periodically through visits to and presence in their office, as well as during their exhumations and inhumations of clandestine cemeteries in rural areas.

*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. This process provokes tense situations in these small rural communities between victims and their perpetrators, and the women from CONAVIGUA receive threats so as not to go ahead with this work. The organisation continues preparing for more exhumations and inhumations during this year.*

We accompany Carlos Guarquez, General Coordinator of the **Guatemalan Association of Indigenous Mayors and Authorities (AGAIL)** and the **Mayan Foundation (FUNDAMAYA)** and adviser to the indigenous municipality of Sololá since January of 2005. We stay in regular contact with him through visits to his office and through telephone calls.

*Background: Mr Guarquez has suffered from various forms of threats, accusations, and intimidations because of his work rejecting the Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) and mining exploitation. On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2005, in the village of El Tablón, Sololá, the vehicle used by Carlos Humberto Guarquez, of FUNDAMAYA, was doused in petrol and set on fire by unknown individuals. Death threats specifically naming Carlos Guarquez, the then Indigenous Mayoress of Sololá, Dominga Vásquez, and her husband, Alfonso Guarquez, 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 within Guatemala.*

We accompany the **Movement of Peasant Workers (MTC)**, an entity of the Social Pastoral Office of the Diocese of San Marcos, which consists of associations of peasant communities defending their human rights. We have been in regular contact with the members of this organisation after receiving a petition for international accompaniment. This month we visited several member communities of the Movement and its technical support team with which we maintain weekly contact.

*Background: Since the beginning of November 2005, Julio Archila, a member of the MTC, has suffered various forms of intimidation and threats directed against him and his family. Apparently his security problems are related to the support the MTC gives to the campesinos who are engaged in protest on the farm Las Delicias, San Marcos. On 4<sup>th</sup> November 2005, police arrested Julio, accusing him of stealing coffee. He was brought before the judge and, on not finding any proof of the accusations, he was freed. Since then there have been other acts of intimidation and threats made against Julio Archila and members of his family.*

This month we started accompanying the **Organisation to Support an Integrated Sexuality to Confront AIDS (OASIS)**, an organisation which works with HIV/AIDS education and prevention, as well as promoting and protecting the rights of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals. In particular, we accompany **Zulma**, member of OASIS, maintaining a virtually daily presence in the office of the organisation and keeping in permanent contact.

*Background: On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2005, the transvestite Paulina was assassinated, making it the seventh murder of a transvestite that year. Zulma, who was present when the crime was committed, was seriously injured during the incident. She is a witness to the assassination of Paulina, accusing members of the National Civil Police (PNC) as perpetrators. OASIS reported the case to the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) in order to obtain justice for the killing, and has been awarded precautionary security measures for Zulma and the organisation by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH). However, members of the organisation continue being subjected to harassment and threats, and during the night of 22<sup>nd</sup> January, Jorge López, Executive Director of OASIS, reported that he had been pursued by a police car.*

## 2.4 OBSERVATIONS

On 16<sup>th</sup> March we travelled to Nueva Linda, Retalhuleu, to observe the situation of the *campesinos*. PBI has been monitoring the case since 2004 through periodic visits as international observers, maintaining an international presence at public events and disseminating information about the current situation of the case at an international level through our publications. A large group of *campesinos* have been living at the side of the road by the estate since September 2004 with the objective of pressing for justice, and remembering the disappearance of the *campesino* leader Héctor Reyes and the state of impunity in which the violent eviction from the estate in August 2004 has remained.

On 30<sup>th</sup> March we observed the protest march organised by the National Coordinating Body of Indigenous and *Campesino* Organisations (CONIC) in commemoration of the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Accord on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Amongst others, organisations accompanied by PBI, such as the National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala (CONAVIGUA) and the Madre Selva Collective, participated in the demonstration.

## 2.5 FOLLOW-UPS

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. On 11<sup>th</sup> January 2005, a day after coming back to work for the year, the organisation received a bomb threat at its headquarters. In March the organisation and several of its members received strong threats. During the month of June, four members of the organisation were subject to attacks and acts of aggression. 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 eviction 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. In February this year they were awarded the land title, however, the community is still waiting for the installation of electricity, the construction of a school and the paving of the road leading up to the entrance of the community and within the property.*

We continue to maintain contact with the **Sololá Indigenous Municipality and Dominga Vásquez**. On 1st January 2006 Dominga finished her duties as Indigenous Mayoress of Sololá but she continues as a leader of her community. We continue to maintain contact with her, monitoring the Municipality and the new Indigenous Mayor.

**Union of Bocadeli Workers (SITRA BocaDeli)**, which is affiliated to the **Syndicated Guatemalan Workers Union (UNSITRAGUA)**. During the month of November 2005, after a legal judgement closed the factory and ordered the National Civil Police (PNC) to guard the factory to prevent the removal of vehicles and goods, the workers were able to stop their vigil in front of the factory. PBI continues to monitor the case

*Background: In August 2005 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 neither their salaries nor redundancy pay. Until November 2005 the workers 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 the payments to which they are entitled. Meanwhile, various vehicles with darkened windows circled 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.*

**José Armando Palacios**, member of the **Union of Workers of the company "Association of the Coffee Industry", and other related Industries (SITINCA)** which PBI has accompanied, has had to leave the country due to receiving serious death threats. PBI continues to monitor the case.

*Background: In January 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<sup>th</sup> April, unknown armed individuals broke into the house of José Armando Palacios and threatened the lives 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<sup>th</sup> May, Mr. Palacios was dismissed without any explanation.*

## 3. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: OUTSIDE OF GUATEMALA

The Project Coordination Office in Madrid, the Regional Representatives and other members of the Project Committee, as well as national PBI groups, carry out public relations campaigns with numerous NGOs, national agencies and governments, parliamentarians, etc. These meetings help in the development and strengthening of the project's "Support Network", an essential tool for the workings of the international presence of PBI in Guatemala.

On 4<sup>th</sup> March Eva Scarfe, member of the Project Committee, and Ulrike Beck, member of the PBI Guatemala team, participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Service for Peace (SIPAZ) in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March Mayte Quesada y Montse García of the Project Coordinating Office attended a meeting at the Office of Human Rights (ODH) of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, organised by Fernando Fernández-Arias Minuesa, Director of the ODH; Silvia Escobar, Special Ambassador for Human Rights Issues; Cecilia Robles, Assistant Director of the ODH; Irene Vásquez, Investigator at the ODH; and various representatives of Spanish human rights organisations in Madrid, Spain.

Kerstin Reemtsma, European Representative of the Project, participated on 20<sup>th</sup> March in a meeting with Dr. Eduardo Stein, Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala; Frank La Rue of the Presidential Human Rights Coordinating Commission (COPREDEH); Norma Quixtán of the Secretariat for Peace (SEPAZ); Edgar Agcip of the National Fund for Peace (FONAPAZ); Hugo Beteta of the General Secretariat of Planning (SEGEPLAN); Ella Molina and Eduardo Aguirre of the Vice-President's Secretariat; Rolando Castillo, Advisor to the Vice-Presidency; Heinz Erich Richter de León, Ambassador of Guatemala to Germany; and Nelson Olivero, Secretary to the Ambassador of Guatemala in Berlin, Germany. This was a meeting with German NGOs, held in the Guatemalan Embassy in Berlin, Germany, to discuss the human rights situation in Guatemala.

As part of a tour of Europe organised by various sections of PBI and with the support of the PBI Guatemala Project, the human rights defenders accompanied by PBI, Carlos Morales of the UVOC and Eloyda Mejía of ASALI, have participated in numerous meetings, talks, and discussions in several cities in France, Belgium, and Germany.

These are a selection of meetings that have taken place with the direct participation of the Project.

In Brussels, Belgium:

1. 27<sup>th</sup> March, interview for *Imagine demain le monde*, a Belgian magazine.
2. 27<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with Mr. Marc Verheyleweghen, responsible for Guatemala within the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3. 28<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with Paola Amadei of the Human Rights and Democratisation Unit of the Directorate-General for External Relations, European Commission.
4. 28<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with Didier Cossé, responsible for human rights for Latin America at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union.
5. 28<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with the Member of the European Parliament Willy Meyer Pleite (Confederal Group of the European United Left), Member of the Commission on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament.
6. 28<sup>th</sup> March, interview for University Radio.

In Germany:

1. 29<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with Ulrike Bickel, responsible for human rights at Misereor, a Catholic development agency, in Aachen.
2. 30<sup>th</sup> March, meeting with Mrs. Weber, responsible for Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean at the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin.
3. 30<sup>th</sup> March, meeting in the German Parliament with approximately 20 Members of Parliament (MPs) and Assistants to MPs, primarily from the Germany-Central America parliamentary group in Berlin.
4. 31<sup>st</sup> March, meeting with the MP Thilo Hoppe (Green Party), Head of the Commission on Cooperation and Development of the German Parliament in Berlin.
5. 1<sup>st</sup> April, a public event in celebration of the anniversary of Monsignor Oscar Romero. Talk followed by discussion, in Hamburg.

From 26<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April Tara Ward, member of the Project Committee, together with the Project's team responsible for training, organised a training week in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, with seven potential volunteers for the PBI Guatemala team.

Montse García, Project Coordinator, held a meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> March with Eric Baume, Desk Officer for Guatemala and El Salvador for the European Commission, and Paola Amadei, of the Human Rights and Democratisation Unit of the European Commission; together with Luis Guillermo Pérez and Marta Ibero of the Executive Secretariat of The Copenhagen Initiative for Central America and Mexico (CIFCA); and Mario Minera of CALDH, in Brussels, Belgium.

#### **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.

**LA COORDINADORA DE ORGANIZACIONES CAMPESINAS E INDÍGENAS DE PETEN  
-COCIP-CNOC**

A LA OPINIÓN PÚBLICA NACIONAL E INTERNACIONAL INFORMA

El día 3 de marzo del año 2006, miembros de la Policía Nacional Civil del Municipio de La Libertad, Petén, aprehendieron ilegalmente al compañero José Xoj, miembro de la comisión ejecutiva de COCIP y Vicepresidente de la Asociación Oxlaju Tzul, sin justificar las causas de su aprehensión, sin embargo, el día 4 fue liberado después del pago de una fianza. Este hecho fue denunciado a la Auxiliatura Departamental de Derechos Humanos y hasta la fecha no ha sido investigado.

Posteriormente el día 4 de marzo del año 2006, siendo las diecisiete horas sujetos desconocidos allanaron la oficina de COCIP ubicada en Santa Elena, Flores, Petén, forzaron las puertas e ingresaron a su interior de donde sustrajeron ropa, zapatos, libros, material didáctico y otros artículos personales de los miembros de la comisión ejecutiva de COCIP, sin embargo, fueron sorprendidos por un miembro de la junta directiva quien intento evitar el robo, sin embargo fue golpeado y amenazado de muerte. Nuevamente durante los días 11 y 12, sujetos desconocidos intentaron ingresar a la oficina, no obstante, fueron sorprendidos e inmediatamente se fueron a la fuga; con esto son cinco los allanamientos perpetrados a partir del año 2005, de los cuales ninguno a sido investigado por las autoridades competentes a pesar de haber sido denunciados en su momento.

Estamos seguros que los criminales no vienen de lejos. Es estrategia política del gobierno amenazar a muerte e intimidar a las personas y organizaciones sociales que hemos venido trabajando con conciencia social para la transformación profunda que necesita el departamento y pueblo en general.

De este reciente hecho, responsabilizamos a los cuerpos represivos que siguen persistiendo en nuestro país. Cualquier otro allanamiento que ocurra, tanto a nivel municipal y departamental culpamos al gobierno de la república; ya que este tipo de amenazas genera inestabilidad, miedo, incertidumbre, y sobre todo más confrontación social. Por lo anterior,

#### DEMANDAMOS:

- ✓ Al gobierno para que ordene con urgencia una investigación completa y dar con el paradero de los cobardes responsables intelectuales y materiales del allanamiento a COCIP.
- ✓ Que las diferentes autoridades cumplan el compromiso de brindar seguridad a la ciudadanía, principalmente para los que luchan por la paz.
- ✓ Hacemos un llamado a las organizaciones mayas, de derechos humanos, mujeres, estudiantes, cristianos, comerciantes y pueblo en general para que unifiquemos nuestras luchas y tomemos medidas pertinentes ante la ingobernabilidad que vive el país, principalmente por la conflictividad agraria, la inseguridad, el alto grado de violencia, y el alto costo de la canasta básica.
- ✓ Si las autoridades no aplican justicia, contra los verdaderos responsables, el pueblo lo hará.

¡ANTE LA REPRESIÓN

PUÑO COMBATIVO Y CORAZON VALIENTE!

Flores, Petén, marzo 13 de 2006.

ASOCIACIÓN OXLAJU TZUL TAQ'A MAYA Q'EQCHI', ASOCIACIÓN SOLIDARIA DE COMUNIDADES DE MELCHOR DE MENCOS, ASOCIACIÓN AMOCAN 29 DE DICIEMBRE, ASOCIACIÓN PARA LA COOPERACIÓN Y DESARROLLO DE SAYAXCHE, ASOCIACION DE COMUNIDADES PARA EL DESARROLLO DE SANTA ANA, PETEN

#### **NUESTRAS LUCHAS Y MOVILIZACIONES SIEMPRE HAN SIDO PACIFICAS Y PROPOSITIVAS**

Al gobierno de Guatemala, específicamente al Ministerio de Gobernación, al Ministerio de Agricultura, al poder Ejecutivo y a las demás instancias del Gobierno de la GANA, les recordamos (porque vemos que se les "olvidó")

**Primero:** que el día 23 de noviembre del 2003, entregamos en las manos de Oscar Berger **NUESTRAS PROPUESTAS**. Él como candidato y toda su comitiva se comprometieron incluirlas en su plan de gobierno.

**Segundo:** instalados ya como gobernantes vimos que se "olvidaron" de nuestras propuestas, y por ello es que nuevamente el día 31 de marzo del 2004 se las volvimos a recordar y les presentamos nuestra "Agenda Común Maya".

**Tercero:** el 8 de junio del 2004, en el marco del "Paro Nacional" les hicimos nuestro tercer recordatorio.

**Cuarto:** en Septiembre del 2004, retomamos las discusiones, donde asumieron resolver de inmediato y con urgencia 22 conflictos de tierra de CONIC, además del caso de Nueva Linda, que se tratará de manera especial.

#### **SEÑORES GOBERNANTES, ¿YA SE LES OLVIDO ESOS COMPROMISOS Y LAS PROPUESTAS QUE LES LLEVAMOS?**

Nuestra lucha y nuestro movimiento siempre han sido pacíficas y propositivas. Nos extraña la actitud amenazante de los ministerios de gobernación y agricultura.

Desde ya estamos solicitando públicamente audiencia con la junta directiva del La Corte Suprema de Justicia, La Junta Directiva del Congreso de la República y la instancia de jefes de Bloques, al Presidente y Vicepresidente de la Republica y su gabinete de gobierno, para abordar con profundidad los planteamientos de la MARCHA NACIONAL DEL PUEBLO MAYA Y POPULAR, este 30 de marzo. NO estamos dispuestos a esperar mas tiempo, el hambre y la miseria esta castigando a nuestro pueblo. NO vamos a tolerar mas su prepotencia y su imposición.



Queremos informarles que no nos asustan sus amenazas, porque jamás hemos atentado contra nadie como tampoco hemos hecho daño al país, al contrario hemos generado divisas al país, hemos dado de comer a los y las guatemaltecas con nuestros productos, hemos puesto el nombre de Guatemala en alto con nuestra Cultura Maya. No nos extraña su suma preocupación por “cuidar la propiedad privada” y no así combatir de fondo la miseria que viven las grandes mayorías de nuestros pueblos, pueblos que han utilizados para llegar al poder.

Nuestros planes y luchas no las hemos realizado en un año, son esfuerzos y desvelos de muchos años desde las comunidades excluidas por el racismo colonial de los partidos políticos que han pasado por el gobierno. Nuestros problemas de tenencia de la tierra, hambre, exclusión, racismo, injusticia, tierra arrasada, invasión a nuestros territorios y ahora con nuevas formas de despojo de parte de empresas nacionales e internacionales han sido de siglos. Estamos en nuestro derecho a organizarnos, movilizarnos y expresar nuestros pensamientos, a pedir que nos respeten y cesen las violaciones a los derechos humanos.

Informamos al pueblo de Guatemala, de la convocatoria que ha hecho CONIC, en los últimos días se han sumado fuerzas como el Consejo Regional del Occidente de Pueblos Indígenas, Unidad de Acción Sindical y Popular –UASP- Colectivo Madre Selva, Defensoría Q’eqchi’, Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala, Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas – CNOC-. Invitamos a demás hermanas y hermanos a sumarse a esta lucha, porque es hora de DEFENDER LA SOBERNIA DE NUESTRO PUEBLO Y LA DEFENSA DE NUESTROS TERRITORIOS.

Guatemala 24 de marzo del 2006.

**COORDINADORA NACIONAL INDÍGENA Y CAMPESINA, CONIC.**  
**Miembro de CNOC, UASP, MICSP, Waq’ib’ Kej, CLOC y Vía Campesina Internacional.**

**PBI GUATEMALA PROJECT**

**Team Office in Guatemala**

7ª Avenida, 1-13, Zona 2, Ciudad de Guatemala

Tel/fax: (+502) 2238-4834

Email: [pbiguatemala@intelnett.com](mailto:pbiguatemala@intelnett.com)

**Project Coordinator's Office**

C/ Romero 9; 28720 Bustarviejo, Madrid (España)

Tel/fax: (34) 918 482 496

Email: [pbiguate@pangea.org](mailto:pbiguate@pangea.org)

Website: [www.peacebrigades.org](http://www.peacebrigades.org)