



PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL – GUATEMALAN PROJECT

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1. NOTES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

IMPUNITY

Legal team in charge of the case of genocide against Ríos Montt threatened

Guatemala, 07.02.2007 (CALDH, PL).- On the 5th of February one of the Centre for Human Rights Legal Action's (CALDH) legal advisors, found a note on their car windscreen, on leaving a government office. The note contained threats against the whole of CALDH's legal team. It referred to the work that the activist was currently involved in. Protective measures are requested for those who were victims of harassment on February 2nd. The note also commented on the rest of the legal team, mentioning their meal schedules, thus demonstrating that their activities are under surveillance.

The legal team has been legally advising the Association for Justice and Reconciliation (AJR), in the case presented against General Efraín Ríos Montt and other soldiers for the genocide committed during the period when the former was the *de facto* head of state. The case, which was first presented in 2001, has not advanced. In October last year the AJR requested that the Public Prosecutor's Office press charges, and four months later they have yet to answer.

Members of the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN) assassinated in Guatemala and death of the policemen accused of the crime

Guatemala, 20-28.02.2007 (EP, PL, LH, ND, AD, SV, PI). - The bodies of four men were found in Guatemala, on the night of February 19th at kilometre 36 on the route to El Salvador. The Government Minister Carlos Vielmann confirmed that the bodies were of members of parliament of the PARLACEN Eduardo D'Aubuisson, William Pichinte y José Ramón Gonzál as well as another body that may be the official's driver. All the members of parliament were members of the official party in El Salvador, Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). On the 22nd of February four National Civil Police (PNC) agents, among them a head of unit, were captured, accused of killing the members of parliament. The Government Minister announced that those captured were Luis Arturo Herrera López, head of the Unit against Organised Crime in the Criminal Investigation Division (DINC) of the PNC and policemen José Adolfo Gutiérrez, Marvin Langen Escobar Méndez and José Korki López Arreaga. According to the Prensa Libre, the accused confessed that they had received money to intercept the vehicle of the officials and rob a cargo that they were supposedly transporting, or the money the officials had received in payment for said cargo. Four days later on the 26th of February, Victor Soto the Chief of the DINC confirmed that on the 25th of February the four police officers accused of the murders of the Salvadorian parliamentarians were found dead with their throats cut, inside the high security prison El Boquerón, located in Cuilapa, Santa Rosa. After the killings of the accused a group of inmates took the prison warden and four prison guards hostage, for fear of being executed as they were witnesses to the killings. They asked not to be blamed for the crime. The Government Minister, Carlos Vielmann's version of events, is that a group of inmates took the warden in charge of the keys hostage, entered the four prisoner's cell, and committed the killings. The following day, the 27th of February, Congress resolved to request the dismissal of the government Minister Carlos Vielmann, the directors of the PNC and the Penitential System, Erwin Sperisen and Victor Rosales, in Resolution 4-2007.

LAND

Campesino leader and his two children assassinated in Zacapa

Guatemala, 07.02.2007 (PL).- The president of the *Campesina* Development Association of Chiotés, Israel Carías Ortiz, 33 years of age, was assassinated along with his two children Ludwin and Ronald Aroldo Carías Ramíres, 9 and 10 years of age respectively, as they were walking to village of Los Achiotés in Zacapa. Family members informed the National Civil Police (PNC) that Carías had left his home to buy medicine for his mother, accompanied by his two children, when a group of individuals intercepted and attacked them with firearms. After receiving the news, Nely de Carías, Israel's mother, passed away. The PNC confirmed that he had received various death threats because of his opposition to local deforestation.

CNOC condemns assassinate of another *campesino* leader

Guatemala, 14.02.2007 (AC, LH).- National Coordinator of Campesino Organisations (CNOC) condemned the violent death of Vicente Ramírez Lopez a campesino leader from Chiquimula, as it has been linked to the recent murders and intimidations against campesino leaders. The CNOC also reported that Ramírez López, 33 years old, who was a leader of the Campesino Unity Committee (CUC) in the eastern part of the country and also a representative of the *campesino* families that have settled on the San José Las Lágrimas estate, in the municipality of Esquipulas, was shot dead by two men who later confessed that they were following orders from the army.

GLOBALISATION

Company will construct hydro-electric dam en Chajul, Quiché

Guatemala, 06.02.2007 (EP).- The company Hidro Xacbal, S. A. will invest more than 95 million U.S. dollars in the construction of a hydro-electric project on the Xacabal river in the municipality of San Gaspar Chajul, Quiché, assured Edwin Hernández, the company's general manager. Israeli company, Solel Boneh, will be in charge of the work, which will start in May and June this year. The construction company, that has signed a contract for the amount mentioned, will be financed by a pool of local and international banks. According to Hernández, the Xacbal hydro-electric project will have a 94 megavolts capacity, the largest of its kind in the last 20 years, and operations are predicted to start in 2010.

ELECTIONS 2007

Rigoberta Menchú accepts EG's invitation to run for President

Guatemala, 22.02.2007 (EP, SV, PL, PI, AD, ND).- On the 21st of February, Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú and the newly-formed political party *Ecuentro por Guatemala (EG)* announced that she has accepted the said organisation's proposal to run for the presidency in this year's elections. After two weeks of consultations between the bases of EG and the political movement Winaq, of which Menchu is a member, decided that they will participate together in the elections.

OTHER NEWS

Some 80% of the families affected by Hurricane Stan are still living in shelters

Guatemala, 26.02.2007 (SV). - Almost 16 months after the passing of hurricane Stan, the government has not kept its promise to house the 7911 families who lost their homes during the emergency. Eighty percent of the affected, some 6328 families, continue living in temporary shelters that suffer from sanitary problems and are without essential services like drinking water, electricity, etcetera. The other 20% (some 1583 families) have had to seek refuge with family members or rent other places to live according Citizen Action (AC), the entity in charge of financing the National Reconstruction plan

Sources: Prensa Libre (PL), Siglo Veintiuno (SV), El Periódico (EP), La Hora (LH), Inforpress Centroamericana (IC), La Semana en Guatemala (SG), Informe Semanal Sobre Derechos Humanos (ISDH), Informador Rural (IR), Agencia Cerigua (AC), Incidencia Democrática (ID), Guatesemana (GS).

2. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: IN GUATEMALA

Team: Katia Aeby (Switzerland), Mary Scott (United Kingdom), Maripaz Gallardo (Spain), Owen Campbell (Canada), Enrique Riestra Rozas (Spain), Virginie Barber (France), Jacques Van Luytelaar (Netherlands), Vanessa Marcos (Portugal), and Nadia Graber (Switzerland)

2.1 MEETINGS WITH AUTHORITIES AND MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Meetings with authorities and members of the diplomatic corps in Guatemala are essential components of PBI's work, enabling us to make known our objectives and our way of working. Through these meetings, when necessary, we can also express confidentially our concerns about critical situations of which we have first hand knowledge through our work in the field. During the month of January meetings were held with the following authorities:

Guatemalan Authorities:

- Booz Lorenzo Pérez, Assistant Director, Directorship of Migration, Guatemala City
- Guillermo Coy, Vice Mayor of El Estor, Izabal
- David Guzmán, Regional Coordinator (San Benito), Department of Agrarian Affairs, SAA, Petén
- Taperio Capriel, Head of Services, Station 16, National Civil Police, PNC, Mixco, Guatemala
- Edin Palma Chinchilla, Commissioner, Station 51, PNC, Coban, Alta Verapaz
- Alexander de Jesús Mijangos Velásquez, Chief of Station, PNC, El Estor, Izabal
- Juan Carlos Pérez Samayoa, Chief of Station, Station 42-73, PNC, El Rodeo, San Marcos
- Kendel Castellanos, Chief of Investigations, Human Rights Ombudsman's Office, PDH, Santa Elena, Petén
- Vinicio Montero, Regional Director, Region 8, National Council for Protected Areas, CONAP, San Benito, Petén
- Raúl Dehesa, Viceminister of Security, Department of Petén, Home Office, Flores, Petén
- María de los Ángeles Chinchilla, Departmental Coordinator, Executive Human Rights Coordinating Commission, COPREDEH, Flores, Petén
- Nestor Palacios, Coordinator, Northern Region, Property Information Register (RIC), Santa Elena, Petén

Diplomatic Corps:

- Norbert Carasco Saulnier, Ambassador and Fabien Moury, First Counsellor, French Embassy, Guatemala City
- Eileen V. Rivera., Press Attaché, British Embassy, Guatemala City
- Juan López-Dóriga, Ambassador, and Jose Antonio Sabadell, Second in Chief, Spanish Embassy, Guatemala City

Others:

- Silvia Solórzano Foppa, Responsible for International Relations of the National Guatemalan Revolutionary Union, URNG, Guatemala City

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:

- Fernando Quiñones, Guatemalan Journalist Association, APG, Guatemala City
- Justo Mendoza, Coordinating Body of Indigenous and Campesino Organisations, CONIC Guatemala City
- Claudia Samayoa, María Martín, Erenia Venegas, National Human Rights Movement, MNDH, Guatemala City
- Luís Lara, Regina Ruano, Silvia Castillo, Alberto Morán, Domingo Tut Can and Miguel Xuc Xoc, The National Front of Struggle for the Defense of Public Services and National Resources, FNL, Guatemala City
- Nery Barrios, Luis Alfonso Mazariegos and Ruben Mazariegos, United Union and Popular Action, UASP, Guatemala City
- Walter Valencia, Technical Unity for Accompaniment, Relations and Consultation for the Social Movement of Guatemala, UTARA, Guatemala City
- Daniel Vázquez, Syndicated Guatemalan Workers Union, UNSITRAGUA, Guatemala City
- Alfredo Che, Coordinating Body of Indigenous and Campesino Organisations in the Petén, COCIP, Guatemala City
- Arturo Chub, Association for the Study and Promotion of Security and Democracy, SEDEM, Guatemala City
- Prudencio Valcárcel, Community Business for Forestry Services S.A, FORESCOM and the Association of Forested Communities of Petén, ACOFOP, San Benito, Petén
- Rut Catalán, Trópico Verde, Flores, Petén
- Agustín Zebecán, Faustino Calmo Chalez, Humercindo Martínez and David E. Velarde, The Petén Front Against Hydroelectric Dams, Petén
- Rosa María Chan, Foundation ProPetén, Flores, Petén

International Organisations:

- Coordinating Body for International Accompaniment in Guatemala, CAIG, Guatemala City
- Forum of International Non-Governmental Organizations, FONGI, Guatemala City
- José Félix García Calleja, Director General of European Affairs, Cooperation and Development, Government of Cantabria, Spain
- M. Elvira Roel Sánchez, Cooperation and Development Office, Government of Cantabria, Spain
- José Antonio Cac, The World Lutheran Federation, Santa Elena, Petén

2.3 ACCOMPANIMENTS

We began accompanying the **Centre for Human Rights Legal Action, CALDH**. This month we began accompanying **José Roberto Morales** who is Co-ordinator for CALDH's Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Programme.

Background: Since 1994 CALDH has had its headquarters in the capital, where they receive reports of Human Rights violations and also direct investigations into the cases. The institution provides counselling, accompaniment and training to organisations, groups and communities. One of their main areas of work is promoting justice in genocide cases, and other crimes committed during the internal armed conflict. We have accompanied CALDH on various occasions between 2004 and 2006. In February 2007, members of the legal team have received direct threats. José Roberto Morales was victim of a kidnapping on the 2nd of February. Two armed men kidnapped him in his car and threatened to kill him. Later they abandoned him and the CALDH vehicle appeared with all his belongings still there (including personal documents, cheques and a laptop which belonged to the organisation).

Since the 13th May 2005 we have accompanied **Carlos Morales**, leader of the **Union of Campesino Organisations for the Verapaces (UVOC)**, as well as other members of the organisation. During February 2007, we accompanied them in their activities in Alta and Baja Verapaz. Among them was a meeting at the Government Palace with the Department of Agrarian Affairs to follow up to the Mocca estate case.

Background: UVOC is a campesino organisation in 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. The UVOC also offers training for communities affiliated to the UVOC and supports development projects within those communities. Carlos Morales, leader of the UVOC, has been a 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 with the support of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH). Following this, he requested 24 hour accompaniment from Peace Brigades. In January 2006, Carlos Morales was victim of surveillance on the block where he lives with his family. The offices and personnel of the UVOC continue to be under surveillance from unknown persons. The situation in some communities affiliated to the UVOC continues to be delicate: in February and April 2006, the campesino families that live in the Mocca Estate were violently evicted, leaving several people with gunshot wounds. In the month of July there was a confrontation between two groups of campesinos leaving casualties of one dead and 39 injured on the side of the evicted campesinos.

We have been accompanying the **Association of Friends of Lake Izabal (ASALI)** and **Eloyda Mejía**, the organisation's Legal Representative, since 21st February 2004, when the threats against her worsened. We accompany Eloyda and other members of the association in the Department of Izabal during their activities and meetings with communities concerned about mining activities in the area. In February we accompanied Eloyda and ASALI in various meetings and also in some visits to communities where they held workshops about the effects of mining.

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 21st 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). In February 2006 Eloyda Mejía's restaurant wall was graffitied with "Yes to CGN" (Guatemalan Nickel Company)." Since the last months of 2006 Eloyda Mejía is being involved in a legal process which accuses her for usurping lands. This legal action has been interpreted by her as persecution and intimidation against her in aim to make her abandon her work against the mining company CGN in El Estor

We visit the **Madre Selva Collective's** office regularly and have frequent contact with their members during their work in different departments throughout the country. PBI has been accompanying members of Madre Selva since June 2004. In January we maintained contact with various members of the collective. In February 2007 we visited their new office and maintained contact with various members of the Collective.

Background: Madre Selva is an environmental organisation which holds regular workshops on the negative impact of mega-projects and in particular those involving open-pit mining and the installation of hydroelectric power plants. Members of the organisation regularly receive threats because of their work, above all in areas where conflicts exist over the issues that the collective reports about. Recently, some members of the organisation have once again begun receiving serious threats. Presently the organisation is target to a series of defamation campaigns linked to the publication of an environmental study concerning the pollution found in the waters of the river Tzalá en San Marcos. The author of the study, since its publication, has received a series of threats. This situation has provoked an international reaction from various human rights organizations in support of the organisation and the author.

We continue to accompany the **National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala (CONAVIGUA)** with regular visits to, and presence in, their office, as well as during their exhumations and inhumations of clandestine cemeteries in rural areas. In February 2007 we visited their office more often after becoming aware of increased surveillance, and we accompanied members of the technical team to an exhumation in Buena Vista, Sacapulas in the Quiché. It is the third time we have accompanied them to look for the remains in this case, but without success.

Background: CONAVIGUA continues to facilitate the process of exhumations and inhumations in various departments throughout Guatemala, mostly in Quiché, Chimaltenango, and the Verapaces, as part of their effort 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 to intimidate them and stop them from continuing this work. The organisation continues carrying out exhumations and inhumations during this year.

We accompany the **Movement of Campesino Workers (MTC)**, an entity of the Social Pastoral Office of the Diocese of San Marcos, which consists of associations of campesino communities working to defending their labour rights. In particular, we accompany **Julio Archila**, founder of the MTC. In the month of February 2007 we continued accompanying Julio and his son when they signed in front of a judge, and we remain in contact with the technical support team.

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 that are engaged in protest on the Las Delicias estate, San Marcos. On 4th 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, as well as other campesino leaders involved in labour conflicts between campesinos and estate owners. Recently, an arrest warrant was issued against Julio Archila and his son Antonio for having transported coffee from the Las Delicias estate in November 2005. The arrest warrants were substituted for other measures while the investigation continues.

The **Organisation to Support an Integrated Sexuality to Confront AIDS (OASIS)** is an organisation which works with HIV/AIDS education and prevention, as well as promoting and protecting the rights of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people. In particular, we accompany **Zulma**, member of OASIS, and witness to the assassination of a sex worker. We maintain a frequent presence in the office of the organisation and keep in permanent contact.

Background: On 17th December 2005, the transgender worker Paulina was killed, being the seventh murder of a transgender worker that year. Zulma, who was present when the crime was committed, was seriously injured during the incident. She is a witness to the murder 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 22nd January, Jorge López, Executive Director of OASIS, reported that he had been pursued by a police car.

The **Women's Sector** is an umbrella organisation for women's associations that works for women's economic development, in the struggle against violence against women, and denounces impunity and "femicide". In February we accompanied the Women's Sector with regular visits; we also had a meeting with Sandra Moran, the Leadership and Organisational Strengthening programme co-ordinator.

Background: In less than 10 days, between the end of May and the beginning of June 2006, the headquarters of the Women's Sector was broken into twice. The first time the intruders stole telephones and money and smeared blood on the walls; the second time they destroyed furniture, searched through files and left a bloody piece of glass on one of the desks. The Sector reported these acts as an intimidation and asked for police protection.

We accompany **Erwin Orrego**, active member of the **Guatemalan National Front of Market and Informal Economy Vendors (FENVEMEGUA)**, a trade union that brings together workers from the informal sector. We continued our accompaniment to Erwin Orrego, with follow-up visits and meetings in the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Human Rights Ombudsman Office and in his union activities.

Background: On the 27th July, Erwin Estuardo Orrego Borrayo, active member of FENVEMEGUA, was kidnapped by a group of armed men dressed in black identifying themselves as police. During the course of his kidnapping, he was victim of psychological and physical torture for two hours before being released. At the request of the Human Rights Defenders Protection Unit (UPDH) of the National Human Rights Movement (MNDH), we accompany Mr.

Orrego and the members of the MNDH throughout the proceedings following his kidnapping. Mr. Orrego had also been kidnapped and tortured in August 2003, and since then has been the victim of threats and surveillance on repeated occasions.

The **National Coordinating Body for Inhabitants of Marginalised Areas, CONAPAMG**, works on the issues of housing access, social infrastructure, and the legalisation of occupied land. In February we continued our accompaniment through regular visits to the office and accompanying members of CONPAMG in their meetings with authorities to follow up the housing problems.

Background: We have accompanied CONAPAMG since July 2004 when their office was broken into and robbed of lists, invoices, floppy discs and money. Many of the communities affiliated with CONAPAMG have either been evicted or are awaiting eviction. The security situation of CONAPAMG continues to be vulnerable. Miguel Zapeta González, resident of the community Esquipulas in Zone 21 of the capital and member of the organisation, was murdered in March 2005. On the 18th August 2006, Carmen Sagastume, another member of the organisation, was brutally murdered. After this act, the morning of the 10th September, General Coordinator Roly Escobar Ochoa was informed that armed individuals in the community Carmen del Monte were threatening to kill him. During the following weeks he and his family found themselves under heavy surveillance.

2.5. FOLLOW UPS

PBI provides follow-up to accompanied organisations that, at the moment, do not require as much international presence for their protection. At the same time, the workers of these organisations remain in a delicate situation and, because of this, PBI considers it necessary to maintain the focus of an international audience on them.

We keep in contact with **Carlos Guárquez**, General Co-ordinator of the **Guatemalan Association of Indigenous Mayors and Authorities (AGAAI)**, and adviser to the indigenous municipality of Sololá since January of 2005, with telephone calls and visits to his office.

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 25th March 2005, in the village of El Tablón, Sololá, the vehicle used by Carlos Humberto Guarquez, of AGAAI and 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.

2.5. OBSERVATIONS

PBI Guatemala provides international observations in public events where Guatemalan social organisations require international attention and interest. These observations also take place when it is judged necessary in order to be able to communicate what we witness, outside of the country.

On the 28th of February we were present as observers during a march of the street vendors in the zone 1, organised by the National Front of Struggle for the Defence of Public Services and National Resources (FNL).

On the 23rd of February we were present during a protest in front of the Supreme Court for the Day for Dignity of the Victims of the Internal Conflict organised by the Mutual Support Group (GAM).

On the 13th and 14th of February we participated as international observers in the referendum about the mining activities in the region of Concepción Tutuapa in San Marcos, organised by the Environmental Municipal Committee, community mayors and members of the community development group of Concepción Tutuapa with support of the MTC, COPAE and PRODESSA. The referendum was built around convention 169 of the International Labour Organisation. The habitants of the community unanimously rejected the mining projects that the Minister of Energy and Mining

3. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: OUTSIDE OF GUATEMALA

The Regional Representatives, the project's co-ordinating Office in Madrid, and other Project committee members, as well as PBI national groups, have been strengthening public relations with numerous NGOs, agencies and national governments, parliaments etc. These meetings develop and strengthen the projects "Support Network", an indispensable tool in PBI's international presence in Guatemala.

Kerstin Reemtsma, the project's European Representative, took part in the CIFCA Guatemala work group meeting in Brussels on the 8th of February. After that she had a meeting with the Conference co-ordination team, of which she is a member. On the 18th of February she took part in a meeting with PBI Germany's project support grouping Hamburg. She also had a meeting with Monika Frank, newly responsible for Guatemala, of the German Foreign Affairs ministry.

Tara Ward, Project committee member and Canadian representative, has continued her work with the America's Policy Group (APG), and acting as a link between the project and Canada's national PBI group.

Montse García, Project Co-ordinator, participated as a member of the International Council in the annual meeting from the 18th to the 23rd of February in Sant Feliu de Pallerols, Girona, Spain. In these meetings decisions concerning the whole of the organisation were taken, the annual budget was approved, our strategic plan was revised and the work at an international level was revised and planned for the year.

4. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

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

PBI Guatemala does not necessarily identify with the opinions and content of the articles and communiqués reproduced.

EL ESTADO GUATEMALTECO ESTA SECUESTRADO GRUPO DE APOYO MUTUO – GAM

Para el Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, la ejecución extrajudicial de los cuatro policías presuntamente responsables de la muerte de tres diputados salvadoreños, miembros del Parlamento Centroamericano, es una demostración del grado de penetración que tiene el crimen organizado y el narcotráfico en las estructuras de las entidades del Estado guatemalteco, particularmente al interior de las fuerzas de seguridad nacional.

En la práctica el Estado guatemalteco se encuentra secuestrado por bandas vinculadas al crimen organizado y al narcotráfico, estos grupos se han repartido el territorio nacional, en donde actúan con absoluta impunidad, incluso tienen amenazados a los miembros de las fuerzas de seguridad, especialmente a los Jefes de la Policía Nacional Civil y a los Jefes de los destacamentos militares en el interior del país, algunos de cuyos miembros han sido reclutados por las organizaciones mafiosas.

Según los medios de comunicación existen dos versiones preliminares sobre la forma en que se realizó este hecho criminal. La primera versión atribuye la responsabilidad a un comando armado con fusiles de asalto y gorros pasamontañas, el cual con la más absoluta impunidad ingresó a una de las cárceles de mayor seguridad en el país, la llamada Boquerón, ubicada en el departamento de Santa Rosa, al sur oriente del país, en donde con la mayor impunidad y saña, ejecutaron a los cuatro policías detenidos por el asesinato. La segunda versión es que grupos de pandilleros que habían sido detenidos por estos expolicías, fueron los responsables de la ejecución extrajudicial de grupo policial que asesinó a los diputados salvadoreños.

La realidad, es que con la muerte de los Policías, se corre el riesgo de que los responsables intelectuales del crimen de los parlamentarios queden en impunidad. El Ministerio de Gobernación y la Policía Nacional Civil deben explicar claramente a la población, que es lo que ha sucedido.

Los expolicías se habían resistido a brindar la información que poseían sobre quién dictó las órdenes para cometer el crimen que llevaron a cabo, manifestando que si hablaban sus vidas estaban en peligro. Los escasos comentarios realizados por sus personas, permitió identificar que habían realizado la ejecución de los salvadoreños creyendo que se trataba de narcotraficantes colombianos. Es evidente que el asesinato de estos expolicías, realizado con el más absoluto descaro, persigue callar las voces de los implicados, con el propósito de que no se conozca la identidad de los actores intelectuales del crimen de los parlamentarios salvadoreños

Para el Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, resulta preocupante examinar la indiferencia de la comunidad internacional, ante la penetración que ha realizado el crimen organizado y el narcotráfico en las estructuras del Estado y la sociedad guatemalteca. Con base análisis serios realizados por destacadas personalidades, el próximo evento electoral a realizarse en septiembre del presente año se encuentra influenciado por el narcotráfico y el crimen organizado, al extremo que algunos de los candidatos a cargos populares, han sido vinculados a estos oscuros grupos de poder.

Por lo anteriormente expuesto el Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo exige aclarar estos hechos criminales, capturando a los autores intelectuales y materiales de los mismos. Al mismo tiempo, que se informe públicamente sobre las acciones para combatir

al crimen organizado y al narcotráfico, sin importar si se trata de militares, políticos o empresarios, con el propósito de rescatar al Estado guatemalteco de las bandas criminales que lo tiene secuestrado.

A la comunidad internacional el Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, plantea la necesidad de tener una actitud más beligerante a fin de limpiar las estructuras del Estado guatemalteco de estos grupos oscuros, retomando el espíritu de los Acuerdos de Paz con relación al fortalecimiento del poder civil y la función del ejército en una sociedad democrática.

Guatemala 26 de febrero de 2007



HOSTIGAMIENTO A ORGANIZACIONES DE DERECHOS HUMANOS

Nuevamente, en Guatemala las organizaciones de derechos humanos se ven amenazadas y atacadas por cuerpos ilegales que pretenden intimidarlas en su accionar. En esta ocasión fueron allanadas las oficinas donde se encuentra el Movimiento Nacional por los Derechos Humanos (MNDH) y la Unidad de protección a Defensores y Defensoras de derechos humanos; además de la Asociación Comunicarte.

Asimismo, el viernes al medio día, CALDH fue objeto de dos actos de intimidación. Hombres armados robaron un vehículo de la institución, secuestrando por minutos al compañero que lo manejaba, lo amenazaron de muerte y lo dejaron cerca de un barranco, llevándose además del vehículo, una computadora portátil y documentos, todas las cosas aparecieron intactas, por lo que podemos aseverar que no se trató de un acto de delincuencia común. Paralelo a este hecho y en otro lugar, a uno de nuestros asesores legales le destruyeron, con una navaja, una de las llantas de su vehículo personal, en un parqueo que contaba con guardias de seguridad privada.

Todas estas acciones se vienen a sumar a las agresiones que desde septiembre vienen sufriendo diversos compañeros y compañeras del ECAP y que se incrementaron desde el 10 de enero recién pasado y que ya han sido denunciadas.

Estos hechos no pueden verse de manera aislada. Las organizaciones atacadas trabajan activamente por la verdad y la justicia en el país. Por un lado atacan a CALDH, que lucha contra la impunidad, particularmente en los casos por genocidio en Guatemala; COMUNICARTE, que es una asociación que ha documentado y difundido visualmente hechos vinculados a graves violaciones ocurridas durante el conflicto armado, y quienes además cuentan con archivos históricos; el MNDH que cuenta con registro de organizaciones de ddhh del país; y la Unidad de Defensores y Defensoras, que lleva un registro de los ataques perpetrados en contra de defensores y defensoras.

Estos actos no son coincidencia. La lucha por la justicia en crímenes del pasado y la denuncia constante de violaciones a derechos humanos en la actualidad, son razones para aseverar que estos hechos son políticos y pretenden intimidar y frenar las acciones que estas organizaciones realizan.

Exigimos al Ministerio Público investigar estos hechos y al Gobierno garantizar la vida y la seguridad de quienes defienden, protegen y promueven los derechos humanos en Guatemala.

¡POR EL DERECHO A UN PAÍS JUSTO!

Guatemala, 05 de febrero de 2007

**PBI GUATEMALA DOES NOT NECESSARILY IDENTIFY WITH THE OPINIONS AND CONTENT OF THE ARTICLES
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