



PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL – GUATEMALAN PROJECT

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1. NOTES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

IMPUNITY

Unidentified gunmen attack women activists in Petén

Petén, 05.06.2007 (FD, AD).- On 3rd June in the area of San José, El Chal, Petén, two armed men killed Maria Cristina Gómez, 46, leader of the Pastoral for Women, and her son, José Luis Reyes Gómez, 27. The men, driving a vehicle, also wounded Maria Cristina's daughter, Edit Corrado Gómez, who worked raising awareness for the Women's Association of Petén, IXQIK. Several social organizations issued a declaration of solidarity with the family of the victims and the affected organizations. They also denounced the fact that since 2005, members of the organization IXQIK have suffered a series of threats and acts of intimidation, including break-ins, which forced them to restructure their work and replace personnel in mid-2006.

Police involvement in criminal gangs operating in the capital, Chimaltenango and Zacapa

Guatemala, 06.06.2007 (PL).- The complaint of a Zacapa resident led to the capture of three National Civil Police (PNC) agents accused of operating an extortion racket against business owners. The Public Prosecutor (MP) has identified at least three organized crime gangs whose principal members are PNC agents. Human Rights activist Helen Mack commented that one of the solutions to end the persistent corruption within the PNC is to strengthen the Police Inspectorate, and not only the investigations carried out by the Office of Internal Affairs.

Break-in at the Latin American Office of the International Alliance for the Consolidation of the Peace (INTERPEACE)

Guatemala, 12.06.07 (Comunicado). On 10th June, between 6am and 7am, the Guatemala City-based Latin American Office of the International Alliance for the Consolidation of the Peace (INTERPEACE) was broken into. Eight computers were stolen, containing information about projects the office is developing in the Latin American region, but other valuable objects were left behind. INTERPEACE is an international organization based in several countries around the world. It works to promote democratic dialogue and processes for the consolidation of peace.

Human Rights Ombudsman presents 2006 report on violent deaths of women

Guatemala, 15.06.2007 (AC).- The Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH) presented its 2006 report on the violent deaths of women, which revealed a disproportionate increase of 90% in comparison with the 2002 official figures, and that the state has not implemented a specific and efficient policy to arrest this bloodshed. According to the report, in 2002, 383 violent deaths of women were registered, while in 2006, the figure reached 603. The national average indicates that for each 100 people who died as a result of violence, 10 were women.

Human rights activists demand security. OACNUDH asks that the government investigate attacks

Guatemala, 29.06.07 (CDHG).- Several human rights organizations, both national and international, presented a second report about the intimidation they have suffered, highlighting that the human rights defenders most affected are environmentalists, followed by the justice sector and trade unionists. The representative of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (OACNUDH), Anders Kompass, expressed his concern about such attacks, stating that indications point towards a systematic operation, and that impunity is the fundamental cause of the fear that is overwhelming

Guatemalan society. Kompas stressed to high government officials in charge of security and criminal investigation, that to “prevent, investigate and prosecute” these actions is an obligation of the Guatemalan State. According to the report of the human rights organizations, 130 cases of attacks or intimidation have been registered so far this year. The principal victims are organizations concerned with the rights of women, indigenous and campesino rights, victims of the armed conflict, environmentalists, and certain international non-governmental organizations.

LAND

The Agrarian Platform denounces raid of its office

Guatemala, 12.06.2007 (PI).- The office of the Agrarian Platform, an organisation of *campesinos* that promotes agrarian reform in Guatemala, was searched during the weekend by unknown persons, according to the organisation.

In a press release, the Agrarian Platform indicated that those responsible “ransacked documentation containing important information for the political work of this alliance”.

Violent eviction in the Sierra de las Minas, Izabal

Izabal, 15.06.2007 (AC).- Dismay, grief and sadness were expressed by the inhabitants of the San Isidro and San Antonio Las Minas communities, in the central zone of the Sierra de Las Minas in Los Amates, Izabal, after their homes were burned in a forced eviction carried out by security forces. Timoteo Mendez, who was at the forefront of negotiations to relocate the families, stated that members of the National Civil Police (PNC) entered by surprise, interrupting a local celebration in honour of San Antonio and, without reading an eviction order, proceeded to burn their homes. Pedro Mendez, assistant of the National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP), confirmed that the community members did not oppose the eviction, and although the PNC heard shots when they approached the community, there was not direct attack against the police.

GLOBALISATION

Social leaders insist biofuels will exacerbate malnutrition

Guatemala, 05.06.2007 (LH).- Leaders of several social organisations stressed their fears about proposed projects to manufacture biofuels in Guatemala based on agricultural products, principally grains that form the Guatemalan staple diet.

Environment Ministry approves environmental impact studies proposed by Guatemalan Nickel Company

Guatemala, 26.06.2007 (PL).- The Environment Ministry has approved environmental impact studies which pave the way for the reconstruction of the processing plant in El Estor, Izabal, according to Regina Rivera, spokesperson for the company. In addition to the reconstruction of the metal processing plant, an electricity generator would be built, and the existing road network would be used for the transport of equipment and not the Rio Dulce river, she stated. She claimed that advanced technology would be utilized for the water cooling process in a reusable closed circuit, so that Lake Izabal would not be affected. Eloyda Mejia, of the Association of Friends of Lake Izabal (ASALI), stated that with the approval of these environmental impact studies the door is now open for the ecological deterioration of the lake, affecting large volumes of water and hundreds of communities.

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), Informe Semanal de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (CDHG).

2. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: IN GUATEMALA

Team: Maripaz Gallardo (Spain), Owen Campbell (Canada), Enrique Riestra Rozas (Spain), Virginie Barber (France), Jacques van Luytelaar (Netherlands), Vanessa Marcos (Portugal), Nadia Graber (Switzerland), Emma Marshall (United Kingdom) and Daniel Carey (United Kingdom)

2.1 MEETINGS WITH AUTHORITIES AND MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITIES AND 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 confidentially express our concerns about critical situations of which we have first hand knowledge through our work in the field. During the month of June meetings were held with the following authorities:

Guatemalan Authorities:

- Hugo Martínez, Department of Human Rights Defenders of the Presidential Human Rights Coordinating Commission (COPREDEH), Guatemala City
- Olvidio Aldana Fajardo, Station Chief, Station 11, National Civil Police (PNC), Guatemala City

- Mario Morales, Coordinator of the Presidential Human Rights Coordinating Commission (COPREDEH), Santa Cruz del Quiché
- Ricardo Rodríguez, Auxiliary of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH), Santa Cruz del Quiché
- Rosa María Salazar, Prosecutor of the Human Rights Prosecutor's Office, Office of the Public Prosecutor, Guatemala City
- Alberto Fuentes, Assistant to Gustavo Meoño of the National Police Archives Project, Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH), Guatemala City

Diplomatic Corps

- Kimberley Inksater, Consultant for the Canadian Embassy, Guatemala City
- Radek A. Divis, First Secretary of the Australian Embassy in Mexico, 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. During the month of June meetings were held with the following organisations:

Civil Society Organisations:

- Father Tomas Ventura, Parish of Chichicastenango
- Helmer Velásquez, NGOs and Cooperatives Co-ordinating Body (CONGCOOP), Guatemala City
- Claudia Paz, Executive Director of the Guatemala Institute for Comparative Studies in Penal Sciences (ICCPG), Guatemala City
- Arturo Chub, Association for the Study and Promotion of Security in Democracy (SEDEM), Guatemala City
- Reynaldo González of the Bank and Insurance Labour Federation (FESEBS), Guatemala City
- Amílcar Méndez of the "Runujel Junam" Ethnic Communities Council (CERJ), Guatemala City
- Claudia Rivera, Leonel Dubón Bendfeldt (Director of Programmes) and Andrea Amado Prieto (Director of Development and Cooperation) of Casa Alianza, Mixco

International Organisations:

- Coordinating Body for International Accompaniment in Guatemala (CAIG), Guatemala City
- Human Rights Commission of the Forum of International Non-Governmental Organisations (FONGI), Guatemala City

2.3 ACCOMPANIMENTS

We started accompanying **José Roberto Morales Sic**, Co-ordinator of the Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Programme of the **Centre for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH)**, in February. In June we continued accompanying him in his weekly movements.

Background: Since 1994 CALDH has had its headquarters in the capital, where it receives reports of Human Rights violations and directs investigations into the cases. The institution provides counselling, accompaniment and training to organisations, groups and communities. One of its 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 received direct threats. José Roberto Morales Sic was the victim of a kidnapping on 2nd February. Two armed men kidnapped him in his car and threatened to kill him. He was later released and the CALDH vehicle recovered with all his belongings present (including personal documents, cheques and a laptop which belonged to the organisation).

Since 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 June 2007 we have continued to accompany UVOC in various activities in Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz and have increased our presence in Santa Cruz, Alta Verapaz. Surveillance of the organisation and its members has continued and Carlos Morales suffered further intimidation this month.

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 providing support in the process of legalisation of the communities' titles to land. UVOC also offers training for communities affiliated with 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. UVOC's offices and personnel continue to be under surveillance from unknown persons. The situation in some communities affiliated with 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 July 2006 there was a confrontation between two groups of campesinos leaving 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 the months of January and February 2006 we accompanied Eloyda and ASALI after a tense situation arose between groups of campesinos that had occupied lands, the CGN and state actors who wished to remove them. During June 2007 we have accompanied Eloyda Mejía in her activities in Communities of Izabal, and we continue maintaining an international presence in El Estor.

Background: Eloyda Mejía has suffered a number of threats as a result of her work to protect Lake Izabal, in the department of Izabal, east Guatemala, and because of her work informing 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, she received yet more serious threats, 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 the words "Yes to CGN" (Guatemalan Nickel Company)." Since late 2006 Eloyda Mejía has had to deal with a legal process accusing her of usurping lands. This legal action is seen by her as a form of persecution and intimidation intended to force her to 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 its members during their work in different departments throughout the country. PBI has been accompanying members of Madre Selva since June 2004 in some of their journeys to the regions where they carry out their work, with a presence in their office in the capital. In June 2007 we maintained contact with members of the collective.

Background: Madre Selva is an environmental organisation which holds regular workshops on the negative impact of mega-projects, 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 appear in the Collective's reports. Since December 2006 the organisation has been subject to defamation campaigns linked to the publication of an environmental study concerning the mining pollution found in the waters of the River Tzalá in San Marcos. The study's Italian author has received a series of threats since its publication. This situation has provoked an international reaction from various human rights organizations in support of the organisation and the author, who eventually left the country.

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 exhumations and inhumations of clandestine cemeteries in rural areas. We continue our frequent visits to their office due to the increased surveillance that became apparent in December 2006. This month we also accompanied members of CONAVIGUA to an exhumation in Uspantán, Quiché.

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 efforts for the recuperation of the collective memory of Guatemala's recent history. This process provokes tense situations in these small rural communities between victims and perpetrators, and the women of CONAVIGUA receive threats and intimidation to stop them from continuing this work.

We accompany the **Movement of Campesino Workers (MTC)**, an entity of the Social Pastoral Office of the Diocese of San Marcos. MTC is made up of associations of campesino communities working to defend their labour rights. In particular, we accompany its founder, **Julio Archila**. In the month of June 2007 we continued accompanying Julio and his son as they signed every two weeks before a judge. On 15th June we accompanied Julio at the hearing of his case, in which the judge

absolved him of the charges due to an absence of proof. There remains a possibility that the prosecutor will appeal this ruling.

Background: Since the beginning of November 2005, Julio Archila, founding member of the MTC, has suffered various forms of intimidation and threats directed against him and his family. His security problems appear to be related to the support the MTC offers to campesinos 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 a judge and freed, as no proof of the accusation was found. 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 October 2005. The arrest warrants were substituted for other measures while the investigation continued. In June 2007, the judge of the Court of First Instance absolved Julio of all the charges due to a lack of evidence.

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. In the month of June we maintained weekly visits to the office, we accompanied Zulma during medical clinic visits, and we observed the Gay Pride march organised by OASIS on 23 June.

Background: On 17th December 2005, Paulina, a transgender worker was killed, the seventh murder of a transgender worker that year. Zulma, was present when the crime was committed, and was seriously injured during the incident. She is a witness to the murder of Paulina, accusing members of the National Civil Police (PNC) of the killing. 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 to be subjected to harassment and threats, and Jorge López, Executive Director of OASIS, reported that he was pursued by a police car during the night of 22nd January 2006. Given the few advances made in the case in the Guatemalan courts, OASIS wishes to bring it to the attention of the CIDH with the support of the Centre for Justice and International Law (CEJIL).

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 the murder of women. In June we accompanied the Women's Sector with regular visits to its office and accompanied one of its members to the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) in the investigation of the break-ins that the Sector suffered during last year.

Background: In less than 10 days, between the end of May and the beginning of June 2006, the headquarters of the Women's Sector were 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 clear intimidation and asked for police protection.

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 November 2006 we brought to a close the activation of our Support Network, activated because of our concern about the security of **Roly Escobar**, CONAPAMG's Coordinator General, after he received a death threat on 10th September 2006. In June 2007 we continued to accompany CONAPAMG with regular visits to the office, also accompanying Roly Escobar during some of his activities.

Background: We have accompanied CONAPAMG since July 2004 when its office was broken into and lists, invoices, floppy discs and money stolen. 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 18th August 2006, Carmen Sagastume, another member of the organisation, was brutally murdered. Following this, on the morning of 10th September, General Coordinator Roly Escobar Ochoa was informed that armed individuals in the community Carmen del Monte were threatening to kill him, supposedly because of his denunciation of the murder of Carmen Sagastume. During the following weeks he and his family found themselves under heavy surveillance.

Carlos Guárquez is General Co-ordinator of the **Guatemalan Association of Indigenous Mayors and Authorities (AGAAI)**, and adviser to the indigenous municipality of Sololá. We maintain contact by telephone calls and visits to the office. Since a break-in in the office of AGAAI on 20th March we have provided accompaniment through regular visits to his office. During the month of June we continued with our frequent visits to AGAAI's office and met with the management committee of the organisation.

Background: Carlos Guarquez has suffered from various forms of threats, accusations, and intimidations because of his work rejecting the Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) and mining activities. On 25th March 2005, in the village of El Tablón, Sololá, his vehicle was doused in petrol and set on fire by unknown individuals. Death threats specifically naming Carlos Guarquez, Dominga Vásquez, the then Indigenous Mayoreess of Sololá, 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. More recently on 20th March 2007, the office of AGAAI was broken into by persons unknown who took important documentation and containers. The association denounced this incident as a clear act of intimidation against workers and members of AGAAI for their work in supporting and accompanying the Alcaldes and indigenous authorities struggling for the protection of the land. They have reported the act to the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH).

We received a request for accompaniment from **Project Counselling Services (PCS)** on behalf of a Guatemalan worker of the organisation who suffered a kidnapping, sexual aggression and the theft of a vehicle on 7th May 2007. On 17th May 2007 the same person received a phone call to their house threatening all the members of the organisation. These facts were reported to the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH). Since 16th May 2007 we have intensively accompanied the person who suffered this grave incident. This month we accompanied the individual in their visits to the Public Prosecutor, the Human Rights Ombudsman and other institutions relating to the threats they suffered. We have maintained presence with this person in their daily movements and in their home.

Background: Project Counselling Services (PCS) is an international organisation supported by a partnership of agencies in Europe and Canada. Its mission is to strengthen the capacities of refugees and populations affected by displacements and other forms of exclusion to participate in autonomous, democratic and inter-cultural processes, including from a gender perspective, within the framework of the promotion, defense and exercise of human rights. In Guatemala, PCS has been involved with the struggle against impunity relating to human rights violations committed during the armed conflict and in post-conflict Guatemala, with special emphasis on sexual violence. On Monday, 7th May 2007 a worker was the victim of a temporary kidnapping during which they suffered verbal, physical and sexual aggression. The PCS vehicle in which they were travelling and which was carrying 'International Mission' signage was stolen. On 17th May 2007 the same worker received a telephone threat in their home in which a male voice stated: " (Expletive), that wasn't enough... We told you not to do anything. You didn't get it. We are going to break your ass and those of the lesbians and whores in your office. We know who you are and what you do. Don't mess around, leave things as they are."

2.4. OBSERVATIONS

PBI Guatemala provides international observation at public events where Guatemalan social organisations require international attention and interest or when it is judged necessary to be able to communicate what we witness to the international community.

We were present as international observers during the Gay Pride march on 23rd June and the march against militarism and impunity on 30th of June, Heroes and Martyrs Day, in which various social organisations participated.

We attended a presentation on the situation of human rights defenders according to public opinion and the international community, which was organised by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH) on 28th June, and we were present at the 7th Consultation for the National Action Plan for Human Rights 2007-2017, convened by the Presidential Human Rights Coordinating Commission (CORPREDEH) and the National Human Rights Movement (MNDH).

3. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA: OUTSIDE OF GUATEMALA

Regional Representatives, PBI Guatemala 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, parliamentary members and national governments, etc. These meetings develop and strengthen the project's Support Network, an indispensable tool in PBI's international presence in Guatemala.

The project's European Representative, Kerstin Reemtsma, participated on 4th June in a meeting in Brussels with Eric Beaume of the European Commission's Foreign Relations Desk for Guatemala, together with representatives of International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE) and the Copenhagen Initiative for Central America and Mexico (CIFCA). On the same day she also participated in the CIFCA work group meeting. And on 5th June she participated in the general assembly of CIFCA.

Montse Garcia, Coordinator of the project, was present on 19th June in the plenary session of the Spanish Congress, where the proposed law regarding human rights defenders was debated and unanimously approved. Also present were Anantonia Reyes Prado, a Guatemalan human rights defender previously accompanied by PBI; Soledad Briones of PBI's European Office in Brussels; and four Colombian human rights defenders assisted by Amnesty International's protection programme together with Amnesty International personnel. The law was proposed jointly by PBI and AI as an instrument for increased protection of human rights defenders.

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.

AMENAZAS CONTRA ORGANIZACIONES QUE TRABAJAN A FAVOR DE LOS DERECHOS DE LAS MUJERES

Denunciamos a la opinión pública graves amenazas en contra de organizaciones que trabajamos a favor de los derechos de las mujeres. Se atenta contra la vida e integridad humanas, con amenazas específicas de violación sexual. Esto evidencia que las amenazas y atentados contra defensores y defensoras de los derechos humanos han alcanzado nuevas dimensiones en Guatemala.

“YA NO SIGA CON LO QUE HACE SI NO QUIERE SER OTRA MUJER VIOLADA Y VIUDA”, esta fue la amenaza a una compañera que forma parte del Consorcio Actoras de Cambio, conformado por la Unión Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas, UNAMG, y el Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Acción Psicosocial, ECAP.

El Consorcio Actoras de Cambio da acompañamiento psicosocial y formación en derechos humanos a mujeres que fueron víctimas de violencia sexual durante el conflicto armado, con vistas a que fortalezcan o retomen papeles protagónicos en la transformación de sus proyectos de vida, de comunidad y de país.

Queda claro que tal amenaza, que compromete la integridad física y emocional de todo el equipo que integra el Consorcio Actoras de Cambio, tiene la intención política de impedir que sigamos trabajando por el empoderamiento, la dignificación y la reparación a las mujeres sobrevivientes de violencia sexual durante el conflicto armado.

En la guerra y en la postguerra la violación sexual sigue siendo utilizada como arma para generar terror. Estos hechos, junto con el feminicidio, y la creciente violencia sexual en el presente, evidencian la continuidad de la violencia en la vida de las mujeres, como resultado de un sistema de opresión basado en las relaciones desiguales de género. Fomenta tales hechos la impunidad reinante en Guatemala, producto de las múltiples estructuras injustas que persisten en este país, en donde los criminales actúan agazapados en o con la complicidad de instituciones estatales, ya sea por acción u omisión.

Nos solidarizamos con todas las organizaciones nacionales e internacionales defensoras de los derechos humanos en Guatemala que han sido víctimas de ataques y amenazas. Exigimos al Gobierno de Guatemala la investigación exhaustiva de todos estos hechos a fin de castigar a los responsables.

Pedimos la solidaridad de las organizaciones nacionales, a la comunidad internacional y a los medios de comunicación, demandando a las autoridades gubernamentales cumplir con su obligación de velar por el respeto a los Derechos Humanos de toda la ciudadanía, particularmente de quienes luchamos por la defensa de estos derechos.

**Consorcio Actoras de Cambio
UNAMG ECAP**

Guatemala, 15 de Junio de 2007

PUEBLO DE SANTA CRUZ BARILLAS EN HUEHUETENANGO REALIZA EXITOSA CONSULTA COMUNITARIA CONTRA LA MINERIA DE METALES A CIELO ABIERTO Y CONTRA LA EXPLOTACION DE SUS RECURSOS NATURALES.

El día 23 de junio del presente año, el Pueblo Kanjobal, Mam, Akateco, Chuj y ladino del municipio de Santa Cruz Barillas en Huehuetenango. Uno de los municipios mas afectados por el conflicto armado interno y el genocidio de los años 80s, además con un 75% de población castigada por la pobreza impuesta por el modelo económico histórico y neoliberal, demostró una vez mas su dignidad al acudir masivamente a la convocatoria de sus autoridades tradicionales y municipales. Resultados preliminares proporcionados por el comité organizador de la consulta comunitaria nos documentan una participación de un total de 44, 837 personas, 23,366 de ellas mujeres y 21,471 hombres de los cuales la gran mayoría ha dicho NO a la Minería y solo 9 personas se manifestaron por el SI.

Con el Municipio de Santa Cruz Barillas, suman ya 9 municipios del departamento de Huehuetenango que han demostrado masivamente su oposición al ingreso de transnacionales mineras a su territorio. (Otros municipios han sido Colotenango,

Santiago Chimaltenango, San Pedro Necta, Todos Santos Cuchumatán, Concepción Huista, San Juan Atitán, Santa Eulalia, San Antonio Huista).

La importancia estratégica de esta consulta radica en que, pese a que el país está siendo torturado por una fuerte y vulgar campaña electoral para elecciones nacionales, los líderes del municipio supieron enfrentar la problemática y coincidir en un solo objetivo: La defensa de su territorio y el cuidado del agua, del bosque y de la biodiversidad. Además es uno de los municipios mas grandes del departamento, una de sus principales reservas de agua, y uno de sus graneros y fuente de riqueza natural importante para la vida de sus habitantes.

Los datos oficiales de la consulta serán presentados por el comité organizador y la Corporación Municipal de Santa Cruz Barillas próximamente. Suman ya miles las voces que se oponen a la explotación de la naturaleza.

EN DEFENSA DE LA TIERRA, LA DIGNIDAD, NUESTRA HISTORIA: NO A LA MINERIA DE METALES

Guatemala, 25 de junio de 2007.

Atentamente,
Mario Antonio Godínez López
Coordinador General
CEIBA

PBI GUATEMALA DOES NOT NECESSARILY IDENTIFY WITH THE OPINIONS AND CONTENT OF THE ARTICLES AND COMMUNIQUÉS REPRODUCED.

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