

via fax: 011 502 2251 2218 Juan Luis Florido Fiscal General / Attorney General, Guatemala	Via fax: 011 502 2362 0237 Carlos Vielman Minister of the Interior & Governance, Guatemala
via fax: 011 502 2360 9909 Carlos Aldana Villanueva Minister of National Defense, Guatemala	

March 1, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are extremely concerned for the safety of **Sara Poroj** and **Sergio Rivera**, who work for the Exhumations Program of the human rights organization Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo/ Group of Mutual Support (GAM). They have been intimidated and threatened in an effort to stop their work to exhume secret mass graves at the former military base Playa Grande in Ixcán municipality, Quiché Department.

At 3am on February 3, a man armed with a gun entered the hotel room where Sara Poroj was sleeping and searched her documents and belongings, while keeping his gun pointed towards her head. On February 4, as Sara Poroj and Sergio Rivera were inspecting the site of a secret mass grave at Playa Grande, a car stopped and the occupants watched them for approximately four hours. As they returned to the hotel, the car followed them and parked outside. Another car approached, and armed men from both vehicles got out. Sara Poroj notified the GAM office in Guatemala City. GAM requested that the Presidential Human Rights Office (COPREDEH) send police, but none arrived until after the incident was over. In the meantime, GAM contacted social organizations near Playa Grande, who mobilized 25 people to get Sara Poroj and Sergio Rivera safely out of the hotel. On February 5, Sara Poroj and Sergio Rivera saw the same car follow them for three hours as they drove to Guatemala City.

We strongly urge you to:

- take immediate measures to guarantee the safety of Sara Poroj and Sergio Rivera, and that of other individuals involved in the exhumation of secret mass graves;
- immediately investigate the recent acts of intimidation against Sara Poroj and Sergio Rivera, make the results public and bring the perpetrators to justice;
- take immediate measures to ensure that all those involved in the exhumation of secret mass graves are able to carry out their legitimate work without fear of harassment.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (GAM)~via fax: 011 502 2220 0606
 El Periodico~via fax: 011 502 2332 9761
 Ambassador José Guillermo Castillo ~ via fax: 1 202 745 1908
 Ambassador John Hamilton ~ via fax: 011 502 334 8477
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk ~ via fax: 1 202 647 2597
 Senator George Voinovich, US Senate ~ via email: Daniel_knezevic@voinovich.senate.gov
 U.S. Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email and fax

UA30 /05 GUATEMALA

The following people hereby urge that you take action on this matter as indicated in this letter.