

via fax 011 502 221 4423/ 2239 0090 Licenciado Oscar Berger Perdomo Presidente de la República de Guatemala	via fax: 011 502 251 2218 Juan Luis Florido Fiscalía General del Ministerio Público, Guatemala
via fax 011 502 362 0237 Carlos Vielman Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala	

March 26, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the actions of the Guatemalan army and police force against women's groups, unions, indigenous, and peasant organizations who have been peacefully protesting the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). These groups know that CAFTA will lead to more poverty and undermine workers' rights. The Guatemalan Congress recently approved CAFTA, despite popular opposition. We are also extremely concerned that in meetings on March 16 between Vice-President Stein and representatives of MICSP (Indigenous, Campesino, Union and Popular Movement), no agreements were reached because the government was unwilling to concede any points and rejected all of the MICSP's requests.

We support the right of the Guatemalan people to peaceful protest. We find unconscionable the actions of the Guatemalan government that included tear gassing the entire central plaza in the Capital, which affected thousands, including children, and targeting union and social leaders with arrest warrants for their organizing role. The military's armed violence in Colotenango, Huehuetenango Department, on March 15, is also responsible for the killing of Juan López of the Guatemalan Education Workers Union (STEG), the hospitalization of three other teachers with gunshot wounds, and the death of another person who died from injuries suffered during the confrontation with the military who carried AK 47 and shotguns.

Since the opposition to CAFTA is broad-based and mostly nonviolent, **we urge you to:**

- end the repressive measures being taken by the government security forces
- carry out an immediate, impartial and exhaustive investigation into the killing of Juan López, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice.

We will continue to join with the international community in monitoring this situation.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

Copies: Ambassador José Guillermo Castillo ~ fax: 1 202 745 1908
Ambassador John Hamilton ~ fax: 011 502 2334 8477
Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk Officer, US State Dept. ~ fax: 1 202 647 2597
Diario Prensa Libre ~ fax: 011 502 2251 8768
U.S. Senators Voinovich and DeWine ~ via fax, email
U.S. Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via fax, email

GHRC_Guatemala

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: