

President of the Republic of Guatemala Licenciado Oscar Berger Perdomo Fax: 011 502 2239 0090	Attorney General of Guatemala Juan Luis Florido Fax: (011) +502 2251 2218
Minister of the Interior of Guatemala Carlos Vielman Fax: 011 502 2362 0237	

May 11, 2006

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about the continuing level of violence in Guatemala. In recent weeks at least four Guatemalan politicians have been murdered: **Christian Humberto Gómez Sánchez**, Secretary of Youth for the Patriot Party in Izabal; **Eleazer Tebalán**, Coordinator of the Encounter for Guatemala Party in Coatepeque, Quetzaltenango; **Mario Pivaral**, National Unity of Hope Representative; and **Attorney Rodolfo Vielman**, who worked with the Patriot Party. These are more than merely names. They are people who should have been able to freely express their political views without fear of reprisal.

We are also aware of the brutal murder of **Meregilda Súcrite**, a mother of eight children, midwife, community leader, and active member of the Network of Women Observers of Human Rights, which is promoted by the Center for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH) in the Ch'orti' region of Chiquimula Department. Meregilda and her husband Longio Díaz were on their way to Mass at the community church in Tuticopote Abajo, Olopa, Chiquimula Department on April 2. A gunman opened fire, shot Sra. Suchite six times and then killed her by stabbing her in the eyes, mouth and chest with a machete.

It appears that her murder was meant to intimidate those working for justice and human rights in the area. The murder suspect is César Pérez González, a worker in the Integral Security Service (SIS) that provides security for the Banrural de Esquipulas. He has not been arrested. He is armed and is threatening to kill another member of the Diaz Súcrite family.

In light of these facts, we strongly urge you to

- investigate the murders of the four politicians named above, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice
- thoroughly and immediately investigate the murder of Meregilda Súcrite, arrest the suspect, bring him to justice and ensure that he does not inflict further harm on the family;
- guarantee the safety of all human rights monitors and defenders in Guatemala;
- ensure that all people in Guatemala have the right to express their political opinions freely and without fear of reprisal.

As a consequence of your high position in Guatemala, you have the authority and the responsibility to take these actions. Be assured that we will make sure that our elected officials here in the United States are made aware of human rights violations in Guatemala.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

cc: Ambassador Jose Guillermo Castillo ~ via fax
 Ambassador James Derham ~ via fax
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax
 US Senators DeWine & Voinovich ~ via email
 US Reps Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

GHRC_CALDH_April 9

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