

Via fax: 011.502.2251.2218

Juan Luis Florido

Fiscal General / Attorney General, Guatemala

Via fax: 011.502.2362.0237

Carlos Vielman

Ministro de Gobernacion

May 19, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We are very seriously concerned for the safety of members of two organizations opposed to the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). The offices of HIJOS (Children for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence) and MICSP (Popular Union, Peasant and Indigenous Movement) have been the target of raids in Guatemala City in which confidential information about their work and membership were stolen.

On May 8, 15 computers with sensitive information were stolen from the office of CNOC (National Coordinator of Peasant Organizations, a member of the umbrella organization MICSP). Other valuable equipment was left behind. The information stolen included details of MICSP activities against CAFTA as well as CNOC's membership database.

CNOC then moved into the offices of ICCPG (Institute of Comparative Studies in Criminal Science of Guatemala), which was raided on May 10. On the same night two other member organizations of MICSP suffered break-ins.

On May 11, the raid on HIJOS occurred; two computers with sensitive membership, activities and plans were taken. A brand new computer with no information along with other valuable office equipment were left untouched.

That the Guatemalan government is anxious to suppress opposition to CAFTA is well-known. Police and army have used excessive force against protesting demonstrators resulting in one death, many injuries and at least 20 people detained. Forty-seven leaders of MICSP are currently being investigated by the Public Prosecutor's office for their activities during the demonstrations.

The government must be reminded to abide by the UN Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals in which defenders of human rights shall be allowed to carry on with their activities without restrictions or fear of reprisals.

Because of this continued harassment, we urge you to

- to take immediate measures, in accordance with the organization's wishes, to guarantee their safety
- initiate an immediate and impartial investigation into the break-ins, make the results public and bring those responsible (including those who gave the orders) to justice.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

cc: Dr. Sergio Fernando Morales Alvarado ~ via fax: 011.502.7775.5476
 Ambassador José Guillermo Castillo ~ via fax: 1 202 745 1908
 Ambassador John Hamilton ~ via fax: 011 502 2334 8477
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk ~ via fax: 1 202 647 2597
 Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (CNOC) ~ via email: acnoc@intelnet.net.gt
 U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via email
 U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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