

via fax: 011 502 2411 9124 Lic. Juan Luis Florido Attorney General of Guatemala	via fax: 011 502 2253 0801 Lic. Eduardo Stein Barillas Vice-President of Guatemala
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April 22, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned about the raids of four development organizations in Guatemala that occurred in the middle of the night on April 5. Assailants broke through two metal doors to gain access to the offices of **TROCAIRE**, an Irish development agency; **ACSUR Las Segovias**, a Spanish non-governmental organization; and **Colectivo Poder y Desarrollo Local (CPDL)**, a Guatemalan development agency. The perpetrators stole six computers, two digital cameras, one scanner, two USB flash drives, two monitors, and one cell phone, all of which contained valuable information pertaining to the organizations' projects to promote sustainable development and enhance citizen participation. Other more valuable items were not taken.

That same day, the Guatemala **CARE International** office was broken into; laptops, one monitor, and several CDs that contained valuable information about their projects were stolen. Again, the assailants left behind much more valuable equipment.

These attacks seem to be intended to intimidate the four development organizations and to halt their programs to bring about a more just, democratic, and sustainable Guatemala. Their ability to perform this work is now greatly reduced. We fear these development organizations and the lives of their personnel are in grave danger as a result of these and prior attacks.

We therefore strongly urge that you

- carry out thorough and independent investigations into the recent break-ins and raids of the offices of TROCAIRE, ACSUR Las Segovias, CPDL, and CARE International, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- publicly condemn these attacks and threats against development organizations;
- publicly recognize the legitimacy and importance of the work performed by development and human rights agencies in Guatemala as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

Copies: Ambassador José Guillermo Castillo ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
 Ambassador James Derham ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
 Guatemala Human Rights Commission-USA ~ via fax: 202-526-4611
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich ~ via email
 U.S. Representatives Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

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