



InterReligious Task Force on Central America
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via fax: 502 2221 4423 Licenciado Óscar Berger Perdomo Presidente de la República de GUATEMALA	via fax: 011 502 2362 0237 Carlos Vielman Ministro de Gobernación, GUATEMALA
via fax: 011 502 251 2218 Juan Luis Florido Fiscal General / Attorney General, GUATEMALA	

July 18, 2005

Dear Sirs:

We, members of the InterReligious Taskforce, are concerned for the safety of **Mario Antonio Godínez López**, General Coordinator of the Association for the Promotion and Development of the Community (CEIBA). On July 7 at 7:40 A.M he received a serious threat via fax at his office in the town of Buena Vista, Chimaltenango. It accused his organization of carrying out "destabilizing actions" that "have provoked discontent and indignation" and recommended that he "abstain from carrying out meetings of more than twenty people in any place because we will understand this as an act of new provocation and we will react in response to your destabilizing actions."

Through CEIBA, Mario Godínez is coordinating work against mining concessions in Huehuetenango and against the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA). CEIBA participated in the national demonstration against DR-CAFTA in March that left one teacher dead. On March 16, the day after the demonstration, unidentified, armed men went to Godínez's office and asked for the director or deputy director of CEIBA. CEIBA is supporting the Campesino Unity Committee (CUC), a co-plaintiff in the lawsuit related to the teacher's murder.

In April, Mario Godínez traveled to the US with Archbishop Alvaro Ramazzini of San Marcos to lobby against CAFTA. In January the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman's Office made public an assassination plot against Ramazzani, the bishop of San Marcos Department. This followed an accusation by President Oscar Berger that Bishop Ramazzani was indirectly responsible for the violence on January 11, in which at least one campesino was shot to death while protesting the transport of mining equipment. (We wrote to you February 23 urging protection for Archbishop Ramazzini.)

We urge you to:

- Guarantee the safety of Mario Godínez and his family and all others who work with CEIBA, according to their wishes;
- Investigate thoroughly the threat to Mario Godínez and prosecute those responsible;
- Ensure that CEIBA can proceed with its peaceful, legitimate work.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

copies: 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
U.S. Senators DeWine and Voinovich ~ via email
U.S. Representatives Brown, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

GHRC_CEIBA

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